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THE

VICARIOUS SACRIFICE,

GROUNDED IN PRINCIPLES

INTERPRETED

BY HUMAN ANALOGIES.

BY
HORACE BUSHNELL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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INTRODUCTION.

It will commonly be found that half the merit of an argument lies in the genuineness of its aim, or object. If it is a campaign raised against some principle or doctrine established by the general consent of ages, there will always be a certain lightness in the matter of it that amounts to a doom of failure. If it is, instead, a contribution rather of such help as may forward the settlement of a doctrine never yet fully matured, or at least not supposed to be, the genuineness of the purpose may be taken as a weighty pledge for the solidity of the material. Nothing, meantime, steadies the vigor and fixes the tenacity of an argument, like that real insight which distinguishes accurately the present stage of the question, and the issue that begins already to be dimly foretokened. It quiets, too, in like manner, the confidence of the public addressed, and steadies the patience of their judgments, if they can discover beforehand, that it is no mere innovator that asks their attention, but one who is trying, in good faith, to make up some deficit, more or less consciously felt by every body, and bring on just that stage of progress in the truth, which its own past ages of history have been steadily preparing and asking for. No investigator appears, in this view, to be quite fair to himself, who does not somehow raise the suspicion, beforehand, that a hasty judgment allowed against him may be a real injustice to the truth.

Under impressions like these, I undertook, at first, to prepare, and actually prepared for the treatise that follows, a long, carefully studied, historical chapter, showing, as accurately as I was able, the precise point of progress at which we have now arrived, as regards the subject of it. In this investigation, I was able, as I believe, to make out these two very important conclusions:

(1.) That no doctrine of the atonement or reconciling work of Christ, has ever yet been developed, that can be said to have received the consent of the Christian world.

(2.) That attempts have been made, in all ages, and continually renewed, in spite of continually successive failures, to assert, in one form or another, what is called "the moral view" of the atonement, and resolve it by the power it wields in human character; and that Christian expectation just now presses in this direction more strongly than ever; raising a clear presumption, that the final doctrine of the subject will emerge at this point and be concluded in this form. Probably it may be so enlarged and qualified as to practically include much that is valued in current modes of belief supposed to be the true orthodoxy, but the grand ruling conception finally established will be, that Christ, by his suffering life and ministry, becomes a reconciling power in character, the power of God unto salvation. Or if it should still be said that he reconciles God to men by his death, that kind of declaration will be taken as being only a more popular, objective way of saying, that God is in him, reconciling men to Himself.

Having shown the steadily converging movement of history on this point, I was promising myself, as an advantage thus gained, that I should be regarded, in the treatise that follows, rather as fulfilling the history, than as raising a conflict with

it. And yet, on further reflection, I have concluded to surrender so great a hope of advantage and sacrifice the labor I had thus expended. I do it because the history made out, however satisfactorily to myself, is likely to be controverted by others—as what matter of dogmatic history is not?—and then I shall only have it upon me, before the public, to maintain a double issue, first of history, and then of truth; when I should evince a confidence worthier of the truth, in staking every thing on this issue by itself. The result of such a canvassing of history was just now indicated, and that must be enough. Relinquishing thus every adventitious help beyond this mere suggestion, I consent to let the doctrine I may offer stand by its own inherent merits.

At the same time it will be so convenient, in the course of my argument, to refer occasionally to Anselm's really wonderful treatise, *Cur Deus Homo*, that I am tempted briefly to review the doctrine he gives. This treatise was the first of all the deliberately attempted expositions of the work of Christ. It is the seed view, in a sense, of the almost annual harvest that has followed; and as all choice seedlings are apt to degenerate in their successive propagations, we are obliged to admit that this original, first form of the doctrine was incomparably better than almost any of the revisions, or enlarged expositions of it since given.

It is a great deal better, too, than the multitude of these theologic revisions and dogmatic expositions ever conceive it to be. No writer was ever more unfortunate than Anselm is, in the feeble, undiscerning constructions put upon his argument, by the immense following that has accepted his mastership. They take what he says of *debt*, as if it were a matter of book-account that Christ has come to settle; or what he says of *justice*, as if he were engaged to even up the score of

penalty; or, what he says of *pay*, as if he had come to bring in some compensative quantity of suffering valuable for the total amount, and not in any sense valuable for the quality or expression, by which it may restore the honors of God infringed by disobedience. His *obedience*, too, is taken as if it were a satisfaction, not because of the righteousness declared, but on account of the pains contributed in it.

Passing by matters of subordinate consequence, the scheme of his doctrine is briefly this. Considering what sin is, he finds it to be "nothing else than not to render God his due. The will of every rational creature ought to be subject completely to the will of God. This is the debt [*debitum*] which both angels and men owe to God, and none who pays this debt commits sin. This is justice, [*justitia*] or rectitude of will, which makes a being just or upright; and this is the sole and total debt of honor which we owe to God, and which God demands of us. He who does not render God this honor due [*debitum*] robs God of his own, and dishonors him."—(Lib. i. Cap. xi.)

How then is the grand necessity to be met. Sin has desecrated God before the world, taken down his public honor as a father and magistrate, weakened his authority, robbed him of his just reverence. What is wanted, then, is that the original debt or due of obedience be made good; that some equal compensation be offered to God or God's magistracy, for the loss of that honor which has been taken away. "For God's mere compassion to let go sins, without any payment of the honor taken away, does not become Him. Thus to let go sin is the same as not to punish it. Not to punish is to let it go unsubjected to order, [*inordinatum*] and it does not become God to let any thing in his kingdom go unsubjected. Therefore it is unbecoming for God to let sin go thus unpunished.

There is another thing which follows, if sin be allowed to go unpunished; with God there will be no difference between the guilty and the not guilty, which also is unbecoming to God. Besides, if sin is neither paid for nor punished, it is really kept subject to no law. Injustice, [unrighteousness] if mere compassion lets go sin, is more free than justice, [righteousness] which is very inconsistent."—(Lib. i. Cap. xii.) Every thing turns here, it will be seen, upon the consideration of what is "becoming," or "consistent" in God as a ruler; what is due to his authority and public standing, not upon the ground of some absolute principle called justice in His moral nature, which obliges Him, leaving no right of option, to punish wrong by the infliction of vindicatory pains. There is no semblance of such an idea to be found in His language. On the contrary, he maintains, by a carefully framed argument, that God has a perfect "liberty," or right of option, as regards the matter of forgiveness, restricted only by the consideration of what is becoming, or fitting, or against his dignity, or due to his magisterial position. Thus, when it is argued that even we are required by God himself to forgive our enemies without satisfaction, which makes it appear strange, or inconsistent, that He also may not do it, the reply is, in effect, that God is a magistrate, as we are not. "There is no inconsistency in God's commanding us not to take upon ourselves what belongs to Him alone; for to execute vengeance belongs to none but Him who is Lord of all; [*Dominus omnium*] for when earthly potentates do this with right, God himself does it, by whom they are ordained. What you say of God's liberty, and choice, and compassion, is true; but we ought so to interpret these things as that they need not interfere with His dignity [magisterial or personal.] For there is no liberty except as regards what is best, or fitting; nor should that be

called mercy which operates any consequence unbecoming to God." He does not throw himself upon some principle of absolute philosophy, which leaves no option with God as regards the matter of punishment, no counsel or deliberative reason; but there is a *why* in the question, he conceives. "Observe why it is not fitting for God to do this. There is nothing less to be endured than that the creature should take away the honor due the Creator and not restore what he has taken away. Therefore the honor taken away must be repaid or punishment must follow; otherwise, either God will not be just to himself, or He will be weak in respect to both parties, and this it is impious even to think of."—(Lib. i. Cap. xii and xiii.) The whole question it will thus be seen, is to Anselm, a question of consequences, turning on the consideration of what is "becoming," "due to God's honor," necessary to save him from a position of magisterial "weakness."

Holding this view of the satisfaction needed, no inference follows that Christ will make the satisfaction by his own punishment or penal suffering. Nothing is wanted, according to Anselm's statement, but some fit compensation made to God's honor, such as would be obtained by punishment, for punishment, he argues, honors God as being an assertion, by force, of his violated lordship. "For either man renders due submission to God of his own will, by avoiding sin or making payment, or else God subjects him to himself by torments even against man's will, and thus shows that he is Lord of man, though man refuses to acknowledge it. * * Deprived of happiness and every good, on account of his sin, he repays from his own inheritance, what he has stolen, though he repay it against his will."—(Lib. i. Cap. xiv.) What is wanted then is the equivalent of this punishment, or what will yield an equivalent honor. But it does not follow that it must be by

punishment—enough that it confers upon God's public attitude, by whatever method, as great honor and authority. Indeed the language employed supposes an alternative between satisfaction and punishment, and not a satisfaction by punishment. "Does it seem to you that he wholly preserves his honor if he allows himself to be so defrauded of it as that he should neither receive satisfaction *nor* punishment?"—(Lib. i. Cap. xiii.)

*The word "justice" [*justitia*] does indeed recur many times in this connection, but never as denoting retributive justice under the offended wrath-principle of God's nature. It means simply *right*, or *righteousness*. As the argument goes, justice comes into view as recalling the principle of rectitude. It does not speak of what is due to wrong retributively considered, but of what is due to God as the being wronged, what is needed to restore his violated honor. Indeed the idea of a penal suffering in Christ, and a satisfaction made thereby to retributive justice, is expressly rejected as a thing too revolting to be thought of. "Where is the justice [righteousness] of delivering to death for a sinner, a man most just of all men? What man would not be condemned himself who should condemn the innocent to free the guilty?"—(Lib. i. Cap. viii.) It is not clear that the word justice [*justitia*] is used by Anselm in a single instance with a penal significance, or in the sense of retributive justice. It might seem to be so used, when it is asked—"If he allowed himself to be slain for the sake of justice, [*propter justitiam*] did he not give his life for the honor of God"—(Lib. ii. Cap. xviii., b.) But he means here only what he has before expressed, when saying that Christ "suffered death of his own will, on account of his obedience in maintaining [*justitiam*] righteousness."—(Lib. i. Cap. ix.) In the next following chapter, (Cap. x.) he does once employ

* See note, p. 33

the word *pœnam*, when speaking of the death of Christ, but he plainly enough means by it, not punishment, but simply *bad or suffering liability*, and that he came into such liability there is no doubt. Besides, it may be seen how profoundly revolting this idea of punishment, laid upon the Son, is to him, when he exclaims, in this same chapter—"Strange thing is it, if God is so delighted with, or so hungers after, the blood of the innocent, that, without his death, he will not, or can not, spare the guilty!"

Retributive justice then, or penal suffering, has nothing to do with the supposed satisfaction. But the satisfaction to God's honor turns wholly, we shall see, on the matter of Christ's obedience—obedience unto death. The conception is that he comes into the world, not simply to be murdered, or as being commanded of the Father to die, but that, having a specially right work laid upon him by the Father, he is able rather to die for it than to renounce it; conferring thus upon the Father a superlative honor, according to the righteous tenacity of his sacrifice. The point is stated carefully by Anselm, who says (Lib. i. Cap. ix.) "we must distinguish between what he did, obedience requiring it, and what he suffered, obedience not requiring it, because he adhered to obedience"—that is to the principle of right or well-doing, which is fundamental with God in all things. Hence the great honor of such obedience. "God did not therefore compel Christ to die, but he suffered death of his own accord, not yielding up his life as an act of obedience to the Father, but on account of his obedience [to first principle,] in maintaining right [*justitia;*] for he held out so persistently, that he met death on account of it."—(Lib. i. Cap. ix.) The immense value then of his death, or the satisfaction made to God's honor, consists in the luster of his righteousness, [*justitia*]

showing all created minds what homage even the uncreated Son bears to the sovereign law-principle violated by transgression.

At points farther on, this very simple and beautiful account of the supposed satisfaction appears to be a little clouded or obscured. It appears to be said that the satisfaction turns more on the *death*, and less on the *obedience*. But here it will be seen, he is only saying that simple obedience, so as to be in God's will, is not enough; it must be such a volunteering in Christ, or obedience carried to such a point of sacrifice, that he dies, when nowise subject to death on his own account. "If we say that he will give himself to God by obedience, so as, by steadily maintaining right, [*justitia*] to render himself subject to His will, this will not be giving what God does not require of him, for every rational creature owes this obedience to God. Therefore it must be in some other way that he gives himself, or something from himself to God. Let us see whether it may not perchance be the laying down of his life, or the delivering up of himself to death for God's honor. For this God will not require of him as a debt, for since he is no sinner he is not bound to die. Let us see how this accords with reason. If man sinned with sweet facility, is it not fitting that he make satisfaction with difficulty? If he is so easily vanquished by the devil, that, by sinning, he robs God of his honor, is it not right that, in satisfying God for his sin, he overcome the devil for God's honor, with as great difficulty? Now nothing can be more difficult for man to do for God's honor, than to suffer death voluntarily, when not bound by obligation."—(Lib. ii. Cap. xi.) Is it then the difficulty, the expense, the death, that satisfies God's honor? No; but it is the sublime rectitude of the Son, displayed and proved by so great pertinacity. Mere difficulties borne do not help God's honor, but the principle of devotion for which they are borne

does help it. Besides, Christ did not come into the world, according to Anselm in passages already cited, just to suffer and die, but only to be in the work for which, or on account of which, he should die. If then the dying itself, as many say makes the satisfaction, it becomes a clear inference that he did not come to make the satisfaction but to do the work, and that what is taken so often to be the main point accomplished is only an accident, after all, of his mission.

Again, two chapters farther on, where it is considered how great value the satisfaction offered has, he ceases to speak of the *death* and begins to dwell on the *person.* No man, he conceives, would knowingly kill that person to preserve the whole creation of God. "He is far more a good, therefore, [since he outweighs the creation of God] than sins are evils. And do you not think that so great a good, in itself so lovely, can avail to pay for the sins of the world? Yes, it has even infinite value."—(Lib. ii. Cap. xiv.) As if it were the person given up to God that paid for the sins. Whereas he only means, by the so great person, the death of the person, and then again, by the death of the person, that obedience which was proved by his death, and confers the tribute of honor that is needed to resanctify the violated honor of God.

The construction I have given to Anselm's doctrine, in this general outline, I am happy to add, has the sanction of a scholar in as high authority as Neander. He says, "Anselm's doctrine of satisfaction certainly included in it the idea of a *satisfactio activa*, the idea of a perfect obedience, which was required in order to satisfaction for sin. To the significance of Christ's offering in the sight of God, necessarily belongs also the moral worth of the same. Far from Anselm, however, was the idea of passive obedience, the idea of a satisfaction by suffering, of an expiation by assuming the punishment

ot mankind; for the satisfaction which Christ afforded by what he did, was certainly, according to Anselm's doctrine, to be the restoration of God's honor violated by sin, and by just this satisfaction, afforded to God for mankind, was the remis sion of sin to be made possible."—(History, Vol. iv. p. 500.)

It is certainly most remarkable, and most honorable to the Christian sagacity of this ancient father of the church, that he was able, as a pioneer of doctrine concerning this profoundly difficult subject, to make out an account of it which shocks no moral sentiment, and violates no principle of natural reason, as almost all the doctors and dogmatizing teachers have been doing ever since. We may think what we please of his argument, as a true and sufficient account of the subject matter, but we can not be revolted by it.

It was the principal misfortune of Anselm, that he was too much afraid of looking on the Gospel of the incarnation as having its value, or saving efficacy, under laws of expression. The fact-form pictures of the life and suffering of Christ were good enough symbols to him, doubtless, of God and his love, but the pictures wanted something more solid back of them, he conceived, to support them—"for no one paints in water or in air, because no traces of the picture remain in them. *Therefore the rational existence of the truth must first be shown*—I mean the necessity which proves that God ought to, or could have, condescended to those things which we affirm. Afterwards to make the body of the truth, so to speak, shine forth more clearly, these portrait figures which are pictures in a sense of truth's body, are to be displayed."—(Lib. i. Cap. iv.) He has no conception that expression is its own evidence. He must make a "solid foundation" by something schemed and reasoned, else there is nothing to authenticate the gospel facts, and show how it is that men's

hearts are at all authorized to be affected by them, as the express images and true revelations of God. He had no esthetic, or esthetically perceptive culture. Truth did not lie in what he might perceive, but in what he might conclude by some process of deduction. Cribbed in thus, and cramped by the inexorable bars of his over-logical training, he could not think of a gospel operating simply by the expression of God, and being only what is expressed by the shining tokens of love and sacrifice; it must be something more scientific, something to be stiffly reasoned under the categories and by the closely defined methods. The result was that his truly great soul was rather narrowed than widened into his subject, and his subject narrowed, in turn, to the closely-stinted measures of his method.

For this indeed is the inevitable fruit and doom of all attempts to logically reduce and dogmatize spiritual subjects —the method itself is only a way of finding how great truths may be made small enough to be easily handled. The definitions operate astringently, taking some one incident or quality, for many and various, and so getting the matters defined into such thimbles of meaning as can be confidently managed. Accordingly it will be always seen, that one who leads in a dogmatic, or closely defined exposition of some doctrine, is gathering his mind, as it were, into a precinct within itself, and that, while he is putting every thing, as he conceives, into the solid, scientific form, he is all the while giving indications, in the manner and matter of his argument, of an immense outside wealth of sentiment and perception, nowise reducible under the scheme of his dogma.

Thus, whoever reads the arguments of Athanasius for his doctrine of Trinity, will see that his mind is touching something, every moment, outside of his doctrine; some figure,

image, symbol, analogy, comparison, which is, after all, to him, the truth of his truth, and wider, and richer, and more vital than his defined statement. And so it is with Anselm in the present instance. He speaks, for example, at the opening of his subject, (Lib. i. Cap i. and ii.) as if it were the great matter of the Gospel that Christ has "restored life to the world;" "assumed the littleness and weakness of human nature for the sake of its renewal." And, beyond a question, this restoring, this renewal of life, was to him the main purpose and point of the Gospel. But he makes out still a theory, or dogmatized scheme of the incarnate life and passion, that carries nothing to that point. Every thing might be done that he describes for the restoration of God's honor, and the matter of "restored life" or the "renewal of human nature," be still untouched; nay, for aught that appears, it might be quite impossible. Indeed it may even yet be a question, whether Christ is to be any actual deliverer and regenerator at all.

But the most remarkable instance of all, to illustrate the detaining and restrictive power of a dogmatizing effort, will be found in the fact that Anselm, so many times over in the course of his argument, strikes the really grand, all-containing matter of the gospel and falls directly back as often, into his theory; only half perceiving, apparently, the immense significance of what he had touched. Thus he brings out his argument upon the very chilling and meager conclusion, that inasmuch as Christ has paid to God, in his death, what was not due on his own account, God must needs give him a reward for the overplus; and then, as he can not do any thing with his reward personally, by reason of his infinite sufficiency, he may very naturally ask the reward to be put upon somebody else, and why not upon the sinners of mankind? "Upon

whom would be more properly bestowed the reward accruing from his death, than upon those for whose salvation, as right reason teaches, he became man, and for whose sake, as we have already said, he left an example of suffering death, to preserve holiness. For surely in vain will men imitate him, if they be not also partakers of his reward. Or whom could he more justly make heirs of the inheritance which he does not need, and of the superfluity of his possessions, than his parents and brethren?"—(Lib. ii. Cap. xix.)

What a conception of the self-sacrificing love of Christ that, after all, he quite "properly" passes over to sinners "the superfluity" of his rewards! And yet the worthy father was looking at the time distinctly on the way Christ will get hold of transgressors to regenerate their nature, after he has evened their account with God. This mighty something, this all-quickening life, which an apostle calls "the power of God unto salvation," and evidently thinks to be the very matter of the Gospel—he is feeling after it, we can plainly enough see, but his dogmatizing effort holds him in so stringently that, instead of launching out into the grand, all-significant, moral view of Christ, as being come into the world to be the power of God on souls, and so the Quickener of their life, puts forward only these two very thin, but painfully suggestive words, "example" and "imitation," and is by these exhausted!

Again, twice before, he had been coasting round this point, as if some loadstone drew his vessel thither. Thus, when showing how Christ paid God's violated "honor," by his death, because he died as being under no debt of obligation on his own account, he goes on to add, what has no connection whatever with his point—"Do you not perceive that, when he bore, with gentle patience, the insults put upon him, violence and even crucifixion among thieves, that he might

maintain strict holiness, by this he set men an example, that they should never turn aside from the holiness due to God, on account of personal sacrifice? But how could he have done this, had he, as he might have done, avoided the death brought upon him for such a reason?"—(Lib. ii. Cap. xxiii.)

In the other instance referred to, he seems just upon the verge of breaking out through the shell of his dogma and his speculated reasons, into the broad open field of what is called "the moral view" of the subject, to see in Christ what is more than "example," the transforming efficacy of God. Thus he testifies again—"There are also many other reasons why it is peculiarly fitting for that man [Christ] to enter into the common intercourse of men, and maintain a likeness to them, only without sin. And these things are more easily and clearly manifest in his life and actions than they can possibly be, *by mere reason without experience.* For who can say how necessary and wise a thing it was for him who was to redeem mankind, and lead them back by his teaching from the way of death and destruction into the path of life and eternal happiness, when he conversed with men, and when he taught them by personal intercourse, to set them an example himself of the way in which they ought to live? But how could he have given this example to weak and dying men, that they should not deviate from holiness because of injuries, or scorn, or tortures, or even death, had they not been able to recognize all these virtues in himself."—(Lib. ii. Cap. xi.)

It is difficult not to be greatly affected by this almost discovery of Anselm; for his mind, as we can plainly see, labors here with a suspicion that there is a practical something "in the life and actions" of Christ that is not comprehensible by "reason," or by the logical methods of theory apart from experience; and "who," he asks, "can say how necessary" this

divine something is in restoring men to God? How very near to another, less speculative, and more complete solution of the *Cur Deus Homo*, did this great father of the church here come! The gate stood ajar and he looked in through the opening, but could not enter.

It should justly be said for him, however, that there is nothing very peculiar in the detention he suffers at this point. In one way, or another, the gospel teachers appear to have been trying every where and in all the past ages, if not consciously, yet unconsciously, to get beyond their own doctrine, and bring out some practically moral-power view of the cross, more fruitful and sanctifying, than by their own particular doctrine, it possibly can be. Occasionally the attempt has purposely and consciously been to adjust something, or make out some formal account of Christ, that would turn the whole significance of his incarnate mission upon the power to be exerted in character; showing directly how, or by what means, it was to be and is that power. The very coarse, and, to us, wild looking doctrine that Anselm exploded, and that held the church for so many ages before his time, representing Christ as dying in a conflict for us with the devil, or as a ransom paid to the devil, was probably nothing but a running down into literality and effœteness of meaning, of those flaming conceptions, under which Christ's power over evil in our fallen nature, was originally asserted. Faith began to glory in the casting down of the devil by the cross. This was gradually converted by repetition into a doctrine of the understanding. Then, by the unthinkingness of that and reiterations continued, the dogmatic crudity was consummated and Christ became a ransom paid to the devil. After Anselm also comes a long roll of teachers, reaching down to our own time, who have it as their endeavor, more or less distinctly, to

unfold some conception of the cross, that will make it a salvation by its power on life and character. In this line we have Abelard, Hugo of St. Victor, Robert Pulleyn, Peter Lombard, Wycliffe, and Wessel, and Tauler; and, closer to our own time, John Locke, and Dr. I. Taylor, Kant, De Wette, Schleiermacher, and others, too numerous to mention—all strangely unlike in their conceptions, and as unequal as possible in their title to success.

But the most impressive thing of all, in the history of this subject, is the fact to which I just now alluded; viz., the manifest difficulty experienced by the adherents of judicial satisfaction under any form, whether of Anselm, or of the Protestant confessions, or even of the Romish, in keeping themselves practically in, or under, their doctrine. Maintaining it most stringently, or even with a bigot zeal, they still can not practically stay in it, but they turn away, as often as they can, to preach, or fondle themselves in, the dear luxury of texts outside of their confession; such as "The love of Christ constraineth us," "God commendeth his love," "The serpent lifted up," "Beholding as in a glass," "Christ liveth in me," and a hundred others; traveling over, in this manner, as it were, another and really better gospel than that of their confession; quite unconscious of the immense wealth they are finding that is wholly ignored by it. Even when they preach, in ruggedest argument, their doctrine of penal sacrifice and satisfaction, asserting the wrath that burns inextinguishably till it finds a victim, they will not be satisfied till they have gotten some kind of soul-power either out of their doctrine, or most likely from beyond it. Tacitly they do all hold to the fact that Christ is here to be, and ought to be, and can be duly honored only when he is made to be, a softening, illuminating, convincing, or somehow transforming and sanctifying power.

After all, the great toil of their ministry is so to conceive Christ as to speak worthily of him in the matter of his life, and get the blessing out of him for lost men that is so richly garnered in him. The confession is universally, that whatever preacher fails in this, fails utterly.

But why is this? If Christ has simply died to even up a score of penalty, if the total import of his cross is that God's wrath is satisfied, and the books made square, there is certainly no beauty in that to charm a new feeling into life; on the contrary there is much to revolt the soul, at least in God's attitude, and even to raise a chill of revulsion. It will not pacify the conscience of transgression; first, because there is no justice in such kind of suffering; and next, because, if there were, such a death of such a being would only harrow the guilty soul with a sense of condemnation more awful. It might be imagined that such a transaction would make a strong appeal of gratitude, and exert great power in that manner over character, and yet gratitude is precisely that, which souls under sin are least capable of, and especially when the claim is grounded in reasons so spiritual and so galling, every way, in the form. No, the power which is so continually sought after in the unfolding and preaching of the cross—that which, to every really Christian preacher, is the principal thing —is not in, or of, any consideration of a penal sacrifice, but is wholly extraneous; a Christ outside of the doctrine, dwelling altogether in the sublime facts of his person, his miracles and his passion.

And here precisely is the reason why there is so little content in the dogmatic solutions of penal atonement; why also the attempts to present the gospel on its moral side, by a partially defined statement, or theory, seem to fall short and yield in general so little satisfaction. It is just because the whole

Christ, taken as he is, makes up the gospel, fills out the power, and that no summary more comprehensive can do more than hint the purpose and manner of it. There is no example of mortal conceit more astounding, if we could only see the matter with a proper intelligence, than the assumption that the import of Christ's mission can be fairly and sufficiently stated in a dogma of three lines. The real gospel is the Incarnate Biography itself, making its impression and working its effect as a biography—a total life with all its acts, and facts, and words, and feelings, and principles of good, grouped in the light and shade of their own supernatural unfolding. The art of God could reach its mark of benefit, only by so vast a combination of matters so transcendent for dignity and expression. Whereupon the scientific wordsman, coming after, undertakes to adequately tell what the grand biography is, or amounts to, in three or four lines of dry abstractive statement! Or we may compare the gospel as a power to the impressive grouping, action, suffering and sentiment of a a picture; for, taken as a medium of divine expression, it comes under the same general law; what figure then would any critic expect to make who should undertake to give the picture by a scientific formula? Or, again, we may conceive the gospel to be a grand supernatural tragedy in the world, designed to work on human hearts by all the matter of loving, doing, suffering, all the scenes of craft, and stratagem, and hate, all the touching, and tender, and heart-breaking, and divinely great expression crowded into the four-years plot of it. Will then some one undertake to give us Othello by dogmatic article? or, if not, will it be more easy to give us the tragedy of Jesus?

It will be understood, of course, that I do not propose to establish any article whatever in this treatise, but only to ex-

hibit, if possible, the Christ whom so many centuries of discipleship have so visibly been longing and groping after; viz. the loving, helping, transforming, sanctifying Christ, the true soul-bread from heaven, the quickening Life, the Power of God unto Salvation. If for convenience sake I speak of maintaining "the moral view" of the cross, or, what is more distinct, "the moral-power view," it will not be understood that I am proposing an article, but only that I hint, in this general way, a conception of the gospel whose reality and staple value are in the facts that embody its power. Perhaps it will sometime be judged that I have labored the vast, uncomprehended complexity, and incomprehensible mystery of the matter, as carefully, and conscientiously, and perhaps also with as true justice, as if I had assumed the power to scheme it in a proposition.

I have called the treatise by a name or title that more nearly describes it than any other. It conceives the work of Christ as beginning at the point of sacrifice, "Vicarious Sacrifice;" ending at the same, and being just this all through—so a power of salvation for the world. And yet it endeavors to bring this sacrifice only so much closer to our feeling and perception, in the fact that it makes the sacrifice and cross of Christ his simple duty, and not any superlative, optional kind of good, outside of all the common principles of virtue. "Grounded," I have said, "in principles of duty and right that are universal." It is not goodness over good, and yielding a surplus of merit in that manner for us, but it is only just as good as it ought to be, or the highest law of right required it to be; a model, in that view for us, and a power, if we can suffer it, of ingenerated life in us. I probably do not use the term "vicarious sacrifice" in the commonly accepted meaning of the church confessions, and if any one should blame the

assumption of the title, I may well enough agree with him, only holding him responsible for some other and better name that more closely accords with the Scripture uses, or more exactly represents the distinctive matter of the treatise.

Note to pp. 19 and 20.

The author had prepared a note, containing an answer to the objection that the citations on pp. 19 and 20 of the Introduction do not fairly represent the mind of Anselm, proceeding, as they do in the supposed dialogue, from the mouth of Boso, his pupil. This answer should appear here verbally were it not too much involved with other matter. As it is, the substance only of the author's words on this point can be given.

He states that he was, of course, well aware of whatever force there might be in that objection, having before him, at the time of writing, three editions of the *Cur Deus Homo*, and translating for himself every passage cited. But, as he regarded it, Anselm was in reality, in both cases, the speaker, questioning and answering for himself, in such way as will best help on the statement of his doctrine; and representing thus, in the form of dialogue, the process of reasoning through which his own mind had passed, rather than the mere dry *pros* and *cons* of debate. That it is not Anselm on one side, and Boso on the other, he held to be sufficiently proved by the fact that Anselm's replies to his pupil, immediately after the words cited, approve, instead of opposing, his argument. He adds, furthermore, that he had, in fact, at first given a full account of the dialogue-form of Anselm's treatise, and of his own understanding of its method; but, finding it was cumbering his Introduction with irrelevant matter, decided to make the citations in a way more considerate of the public patience, and, to his mind, quite as much in accordance with the truth.

PART I.

NOTHING SUPERLATIVE IN VICARIOUS SACRIFICE, OR ABOVE THE UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES OF RIGHT AND DUTY.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEANING OF VICARIOUS SACRIFICE.

It is a matter of sorrowful indication, that the thing most wanting to be cleared in Christianity is still, as it ever has been, the principal thing; viz., the meaning and method of reconciliation itself, or of what is commonly called the vicarious sacrifice. This fact would even be itself a considerable evidence against the gospel, were it not that the subject matter—so vast in the reach of its complications, and so nearly transcendent in the height of its reasons—yields up easily to faith its practical significance, when refusing to be theoretically mastered, as yet, by the understanding.

There has been a litigation of the sacrifice going on for these eighteen hundred years, and especially for the last eight hundred; yet still it remains an open question with many, whether any such thing as vicarious sacrifice pertains to the work of salvation Christ has accomplished. On one side the fact is abjured as irrational and revolting. On the other it is affirmed as a principal fact of the Christian salvation; though I feel obliged to confess that it is too commonly maintained under definitions and forms of argument that make it revolting. And which of the two is the greater wrong

and most to be deplored, that by which the fact itself is rejected, or that by which it is made fit to be rejected, I will not stay to discuss. Enough that Christianity, in either way, suffers incalculable loss; or must, if there be any such principal matter in it, as I most certainly believe that there is.

Assuming now, for the subject of this treatise, the main question stated, our first point must be to settle a just and true conception of vicarious sacrifice, or of what is the real undertaking of Christ in the matter of such sacrifice. For in all such matters, the main issue is commonly decided by adjusting other and better conceptions of the question itself, and not by forcing old ones through into victory, by the artillery practice of better contrived arguments.

What is to be understood by vicarious sacrifice.

This word *vicarious*, that has made so conspicuous a figure in the debates of theology, it must be admitted is no word of the Scripture. The same is true, however, of *free agency*, *character*, *theology*, and of many other terms which the conveniences of use have made common. If a word appears to be wanted in Christian discussions or teachings, the fact that it is not found in the Scripture is no objection to it; we have only to be sure that we understand what we mean by it. In the case, too, of this particular word *vicarious*, a special care is needed, lest we enter something into the meaning, from ourselves, which is not included in the large variety of Scripture terms and expressions the word is set to represent.

Thus we have—"made a curse for us"—"bare our sins"—"hath laid on him the iniquity of us all"—"made to be sin for us"—"offered to bear the sins of many"—"borne our griefs and carried our sorrows"—"wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities"—"tasted death for every man." The whole Gospel is a texture, thus of vicarious conceptions, in which Christ is represented, in one way or another, as coming into our place, substituted in our stead, bearing our burdens, answering for us, and standing in a kind of suffering sponsorship for the race.

Now the word *vicarious* is chosen to represent, and gather up into itself all these varieties of expression. It is the same word, in the root, as the word *vice* in vice-gerent, viceroy, vicar, vicar-general, vice-president, and the like. It is a word that carries always a face of substitution, indicating that one person comes in place, somehow, of another. Thus a vice-president is one who is to act in certain contingencies, as and for the president; a viceroy, for the king. The ecclesiastical vicar too, was a vicar as being sent to act for the monastic body, whose duties were laid as a charge upon him; and the pope is called the vicar of Christ, in the same way, as being authorized to fill Christ's place. Any person acts vicariously, in this view, just so far as he comes in place of another. The commercial agent, the trustee, the attorney, are examples of vicarious action at common law.

Then if we speak of "sacrifice," any person acts in a way of "vicarious sacrifice," not when he burns upon an altar in some other's place, but when he makes loss

for him, even as he would make loss for himself, in the offering of a sacrifice for his sin. The expression is a figure, representing that the party making such sacrifice for another, comes into burden, pain, weariness, or even to the yielding up of life for his sake. The word "vicarious" does not say all, nor the word "sacrifice," but the two together make out the true figure of Christ and his Gospel.

In this sense it is that Christianity or the Christian salvation is a vicarious sacrifice. It does not mean simply that Christ puts himself into the case of man as a helper; one man helps another without any vicarious relationship implied or supposed. Neither does it mean that Christ undertakes for man in a way of influence; one man tries to influence another, without coming at all into his place. Neither does the vicarious sacrifice imply that he simply comes under common liabilities with us, as when every citizen suffers for the wrongs and general misconduct and consequent misgovernment of the community to which he belongs. Nor that he simply comes into the track of those penal retributions which outrun the wrongs they chastise, passing over upon the innocent, as the sins of fathers propagate their evils in the generations of their children coming after. The idea of Christ's vicarious sacrifice is not matched by any of these lighter examples, though it has something in common with them all, and is therefore just so much likelier to be confounded with them by a lighter and really sophistical interpretation.

What vicarious sacrifice does not mean.

On the other hand, we are not to hold the Scripture terms of vicarious sacrifice, as importing a literal substitution of places, by which Christ becomes a sinner for sinners, or penally subject to our deserved penalties. That is a kind of substitution that offends every strongest sentiment of our nature. He can not become guilty for us. Neither, as God is a just being, can he be any how punishable in our place—all God's moral sentiments would be revolted by that. And if Christ should himself consent to such punishment, he would only ask to have all the most immovable convictions, both of God's moral nature and our own, confounded, or eternally put by.

Excluding now all these under-stated and over-stated explanations we come to the true conception, which is that Christ, in what is called his vicarious sacrifice, simply engages, at the expense of great suffering and even of death itself, to bring us out of our sins themselves and so out of their penalties; being himself profoundly identified with us in our fallen state, and burdened in feeling with our evils. Nor is there any thing so remote, or difficult, or violent, in this vicarious relation, assumed by Christ as many appear to suppose. It would rather be a wonder if, being what he is, he did not assume it. For we are to see and make our due account of this one fact, that a good being is, by the supposition, ready, just according to his goodness, to act vicariously in behalf of any bad, or miserable being, whose condition he is able to restore. For a good being is not simply one who gives bounties

The positive conception.

and favors, but one who is in the principle of love; and it is the nature of love, universally, to insert itself into the miseries, and take upon its feeling the burdens of others. Love does not consider the ill desert of the subject; he may even be a cruel and relentless enemy. It does not consider the expense of toil, and sacrifice, and suffering, the intervention may cost. It stops at nothing but the known impossibility of relief, or benefit; asks for nothing as inducement, but the opportunity of success. Love is a principle essentially vicarious in its own nature, identifying the subject with others, so as to suffer their adversities and pains, and taking on itself the burden of their evils. It does not come in officiously and abruptly, and propose to be substituted in some formal and literal way that overturns all the moral relations of law and desert, but it clings to the evil and lost man as in feeling, afflicted for him, burdened by his ill deserts, incapacities and pains, encountering gladly any loss or suffering for his sake. Approving nothing wrong in him, but faithfully reproving and condemning him in all sin, it is yet made sin—plunged, so to speak, into all the fortunes of sin, by its friendly sympathy. In this manner it is entered vicariously into sacrifice on his account. So naturally and easily does the vicarious sacrifice commend itself to our intelligence, by the stock ideas and feelings out of which it grows.

Love a vicarious principle.

How it was with Christ, and how he bore our sins, we can see exactly, from a very impressive and remarkable passage in Matthew's Gospel, where he conceives that

Christ is entered vicariously into men's diseases, just as he is elsewhere shown to bear, and to be vicariously entered into, the burden of their sins. I produce the passage, at this early point in the discussion, because of the very great and decisive importance it has; for it is remarkable as being the one Scripture citation, that gives, beyond a question, the exact *usus loquendi* of all the vicarious and sacrificial language of the New Testament.

Usus loquendi of the sacrificial terms.

Christ has been pouring out his sympathies, all day, in acts of healing, run down, as it were, by the wretched multitudes crowding about him and imploring his pity. No humblest, most repulsive creature is neglected or fails to receive his tenderest, most brotherly consideration. His heart accepts each one as a burden upon its feeling, and by that feeling he is inserted into the lot, the pain, the sickness, the sorrow of each. And so the evangelist, having, as we see, no reference whatever to the substitution for sin, says—"That it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying —'Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses.'"* And the text is the more remarkable that the passage he cites from Isaiah, is from his 53d chapter, which is, in fact, a kind of stock chapter, whence all the most vicarious language of the New Testament is drawn. Besides the word *bare* occurs in the citation; a word that is based on the very same figure of carrying as that which is used in the expression, "bare our sins," "bare the sins of many," and is moreover precisely the

* Matth. viii, 17.

same word which is used by the Apostle when he says [Βαστάζετε] "bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." If then we desire to know exactly what the substitution of Christ for sin was, and how far it went—what it means for example that he bare our sin—we have only to revert back to what is here said of his relation to sicknesses, and our question is resolved.

What then does it mean that Christ "bare our sicknesses?" Does it mean that he literally had our sicknesses transferred to him, and so taken off from us? Does it mean that he became blind for the blind, lame for the lame, a leper for the lepers, suffering in himself all the fevers and pains he took away from others? No one had ever such a thought. How then did he bear our sicknesses, or in what sense? In the sense that he took them on his feeling, had his heart burdened by the sense of them, bore the disgusts of their loathsome decays, felt their pains over again, in the tenderness of his more than human sensibility. Thus manifestly it was that he bare our sicknesses—his very love to us put him, so far, in a vicarious relation to them, and made him, so far, a partaker in them.*

* This most natural and certainly great and worthy meaning for the passage from Matthew is so far off from the dogmatic and prosy literalism of many, that they are able to see scarcely any thing in it. Bishop Pearce, just because the passage does not meet his notion of Isaiah's famous Christological chapter, and does not signify any thing true enough in itself, imagines that it must be an interpolation! Dr. Magee (Vol. I., pp. 313–355) expends more than forty pages of learning on it, contriving how he may get the Prophet and Evangelist together, in some meaning that will make room for a more literal and penal bearing of sins than

Here then we have the true law of interpretation, when the vicarious relation of Christ to our sins comes into view. It does not mean that he takes them literally upon him, as some of the old theologians and a very few moderns appear to believe; it does not mean that

there can be of sicknesses. By a heavy practice on the Hebrew verb in the first clause, and the Hebrew noun in the second, he gets the "took" converted into "took away" and the sicknesses into "sorrows;" reading thus—"Himself took away our infirmities and bare our sorrows." But it happens most unfortunately that the Greek word of the evangelist [ελαβε] will not bear any such meaning as "took away," but insists on signifying only that kind of taking which appropriates, or receives, or even seizes by robbery; and the Greek word [νοσους] never means any thing but "sickness;" save when it is used as an epithet in speaking figuratively of the "diseases of the mind." The fact is that the evangelist translates the prophet well, and the English version translates the evangelist well, and the vicariousness resulting is a grand, living idea, such as meets the highest intelligence, and yields an impression that accords with the best revelations of consciousness, in the state of love. Every true Christian knows what it is to bear the sins of wrong-doers and enemies in this manner, and loves to imagine that, in doing it, he learns from the cross of his Master—being almost raised into the plane of divinity himself, by a participation so exalted. There was never a case of construction more simple and plain than this, and it has the merit, if we receive it, of carrying us completely clear, at once, of all the fearful stumbling blocks which a crude, over-literal interpretation has been piling about the cross for so many centuries. There is no stranger freak of dullness in all the literary history of the world, and nothing that is going to make a more curious chapter for the ages to come, than the constructions raised on these vicarious forms of Scripture, and the immense torment of learning and theologic debate that has occupied a whole millenium in consequence. The long period, preceding, when Christ was regarded as a ransom paid to the devil, will be more easily qualified by allowances that save it in respect.

he took their ill desert upon him by some mysterious act of imputation, or had their punishment transferred to his person. A sickness might possibly be transferred, but a sin can not by any rational possibility. It does not mean that he literally came into the hell of our retributive evils under sin, and satisfied, by his own suffering, the violated justice of God; for that kind of penal suffering would satisfy nothing but the very worst injustice. No, but the bearing of our sins does mean, that Christ bore them on his feeling, became inserted into their bad lot by his sympathy as a friend, yielded up himself and his life, even, to an effort of restoring mercy; in a word that he bore our sins in just the same sense that he bore our sicknesses. Understand that love itself is an essentially vicarious principle, and the solution is no longer difficult.

How Christ takes our sins upon him.

See how it is with love in the case of a mother. She loves her child, and it comes out in that fact, or from it, that she watches for the child, bears all its pains and sicknesses on her own feeling, and when it is wronged, is stung herself, by the wrong put upon it, more bitterly far than the child. She takes every chance of sacrifice for it, as her own opportunity. She creates, in fact, imaginary ills for it, because she has not opportunities enough of sacrifice. In the same manner a friend that is real and true takes all the sufferings, losses, wrongs, indignities, of a friend on his own feeling, and will sometimes suffer even more for him than he does for himself. So also

Motherhood, friendship, patriotism vicarious.

with the patriot or citizen who truly loves his country, even though that love is mixed with many false fires that are only fires of ambition or revenge—how does it wrench his feeling, what a burden does it lay upon his concern, by day and by night, when that country, so dear to him, is being torn by faction, and the fate of its laws and liberties is thrown upon the chances of an armed rebellion. Then you will see how many thousands of citizens, who never knew before what sacrifices it was in the power of their love to make for their country's welfare, rushing to the field and throwing their bodies and dear lives on the battle's edge to save it!

Thus it is that every sort of love is found twining its feeling always into the feeling, and loss, and want, and woe, of whatever people, or person, or even enemy, it loves; thus that God himself takes our sinning enmity upon his heart, painfully burdened by our broken state, and travailing, in all the deepest feeling of his nature, to recover us to himself. And this it is which the cross and vicarious sacrifice of Jesus signify to us, or outwardly express. Such a God in love, must be such a Saviour in suffering—he could not well be other or less. There is a Gethsemane hid in all love, and when the fit occasion comes, no matter how great and high the subject may be, its heavy groaning will be heard—even as it was in Christ. He was in an agony, exceeding sorrowful even unto death. By that sign it was that God's love broke into the world, and Christianity was born!

Here, then, as I conceive, is the true seed principle of

the Christian salvation. What we call the vicarious sacrifice of Christ is nothing strange as regards the principle of it, no superlative, unexampled, and therefore unintelligible grace. It only does and suffers, and comes into substitution for, just what any and all love will, according to its degree. And, in this view, it is not something higher in principle than our human virtue knows, and which we ourselves are never to copy or receive, but it is to be understood by what we know already, and is to be more fully understood by what we are to know hereafter, when we are complete in Christ. Nothing is wanting to resolve the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus, but the commonly known, always familiar principle of love, accepted as the fundamental law of duty, even by mankind. Given the universality of love, the universality of vicarious sacrifice is given also. Here is the center and deepest spot of good, or goodness, conceivable. At this point we look into heaven's eye itself, and read the meaning of all heavenly grace.

Nothing superlative in the principle of the cross.

How much to be regretted then is it, that Christianity has been made so great an offense, to so many ingenuous and genuinely thoughtful souls, at just this point of vicarious sacrifice, where it is noblest to thought, and grandest, and most impressive to feeling. There ought never to be a question over its reality and truth to nature, more than over a mother's watch and waiting for her child. And yet there has been kept up, for centuries, what a strain of logical, or theological endeavor—shall I call it high, or

The great offense of the cross a contribution of theology.

shall I call it weak and low?—to make out some formal, legal, literal account of substitution and vicarious sacrifice, in which all God's quickening motivity and power are taken away from the feeling, and nothing left but a sapless wood, or dry stubble of reason, for a mortal sinner's faith to cling to. Nothing is so simple, and beautiful, and true, and close to feeling, as this same blessed truth—Jesus the Lord in vicarious sacrifice; and yet there is made of it, I know not what, or how many riddles, which to solve, were it possible, were only to miss of its power; much more, which to miss of solving, is only to be lost in mazes and desert windings where even faith itself is only turned to jangling. How often has the innate sense of justice in men been mocked by the speculated satisfactions of justice, or schemes of satisfaction, made up for God; how often has the human feeling that would have been attracted and melted, by the gracious love of Jesus, coming to assume our nature and bear our sin, been chilled, or revolted, by some account of his death, that turns it to a theologic fiction, by contriving how he literally had our sin upon him, and was therefore held to die retributively on account of it.

No vitality in a Gospel without vicarious sacrifice.

At the same time, there have been thrown off into antagonism, a great many times, whole sects of disciples, who could see no way to escape the revolting theories of vicarious sacrifice, but to formally deny the fact; and then what evidence have they given of the fact, as a distinctive integral element of Christianity, by their utter inability, in the way of denial, to maintain the vi-

tality and propagating power of Christian society without it. If God's love has no vicarious element, theirs of course will have as little; if he simply stands by law and retribution, if he never enters himself into human evils and sins, so as to be burdened by them, never identifies himself with souls under evil, to bear them—enemies and outcasts though they be—then it will be seen that they, as believers, are never in affliction for the sin of others, never burdened as intercessors for them; for there was in fact no such mind in Christ Jesus himself. On the contrary, as God stands off, waiting only by the laws of duty and abstract justice, moved vicariously to no intervention, so will they lose out the soul-bond of unity and religious fellowship with their kind, dropping asunder into atoms of righteous individuality, and counting it even a kind of undignified officiousness to be overmuch concerned for others. Christian society is by that time gone. The sense of God, translating himself into the evils and fallen fortunes of souls, in the vicarious love and passion of his Son, was the root of it; and that being gone, the divine life takes no headship in them, they no membership of unity with each other. They are only incommunicable monads—the Christian *koinonia* is lost or abolished. "I will take care of myself, answer for myself, and let every other do the same"—that is the Christianity left—it is duty, self-care, right living atomically held before moral standards. As to the church, or the church life, it no longer exists; Christ is the head of nothing, because he has never come into the cause, or feeling, or life of any, by coming

into their lot. So necessary is the faith of a vicarious sacrifice to the maintenance of any genuine Christian life and society. Without and apart from it individualities are never bridged, never made coalescent, or common to each other. The chill that follows must in due time be fatal. No such mode of necessary unfellowship can live.

By this experimental proof, it can be clearly seen how necessary to the living Gospel and church of Christ is the faith, in some true sense, of a vicarious sacrifice. And what that sense may be it is not difficult, I think, to find. We have already found that love itself contains the fact and is the sufficient and easy solution.

Objection that God must be unhappy in love.

But there is an objection to be encountered even here, before the solution will be satisfactory to some; it is that if love, love in God, and love in all beings created and uncreated, is an essentially vicarious element or principle; if it moves to the certain identification of the loving party with evil minds and their pains, and the assuming of them, to be a burden on its feeling, or even a possible agony in it; then, as long as there is any such thing as evil and death, love must be a cause of unhappiness, a lot of suffering and sorrow. In one view it must, in another it will be joy itself, the fullest, and profoundest, and sublimest joy conceivable. There was never a being on earth so deep in his peace and so essentially blessed as Jesus Christ. Even his agony itself is scarcely an exception. There is no joy so grand as that which

has a form of tragedy, and there is besides, in a soul given up to loss and pain for love's sake, such a consciousness of good—it is so far ennobled by its own great feeling—that it rises in the sense of magnitude, and majesty, and Godlikeness, and has thoughts breaking out in it as the sound of many waters, joys that are full as the sea. And this, too, corresponds exactly with our human experience. We are never so happy, so essentially blessed as when we suffer well, wearing out our life in sympathies spent on the evil and undeserving, burdened heavily in our prayers, struggling on through secret Gethsemanes and groaning before God in groanings audible to God alone, for those who have no mercy on themselves. What man of the race ever finds that in such love as this he has been made unhappy? As Christ himself bequeathed his joy to such, so has he found it to be a most real and dear bequest, and that when he has been able, after Christ's example, to bear most and be deepest in sacrifice for others—even painful sacrifice—then has he been raised to the highest pitch of beatitude. The compensations of such a life transcend, how sublimely, the losses. As they did with Christ, so they do with us, so they will in all beings and worlds. Therefore when we say that love is a principle of vicarious sacrifice, how far off are we from casting any shade of gloom on the possibilities and fortunes of this love. We only magnify its joy and brighten its prospect.

Thus we take our beginning for this great subject, the grace of the cross, and the Christian salvation. As yet we have scarcely passed the gate, but the gate is

open. This one thing is clear, that love is a vicarious principle, bound by its own nature itself to take upon its feeling, and care, and sympathy, those who are down under evil and its penalties. Thus it is that Jesus takes our nature upon him, to be made a curse for us and to bear our sin. Holding such a view of vicarious sacrifice, we must find it belonging to the essential nature of all holy virtue. We are also required, of course, to go forward and show how it pertains to all other good beings, as truly as to Christ himself in the flesh—how the eternal Father before Christ, and the Holy Spirit coming after, and the good angels both before and after, all alike have borne the burdens, struggled in the pains of their vicarious feeling for men; and then, at last, how Christianity comes to its issue, in begetting in us the same vicarious love that reigns in all the glorified and good minds of the heavenly kingdom; gathering us in after Christ our Master, as they that have learned to bear his cross, and be with him in his passion. Then having seen how Christ, as a power on character and life, renews us in this love, we shall be able to consider the very greatly inferior question, how far and in what manner he becomes our substitute, before the law violated by our transgression.

All good beings in the principle of vicarious sacrifice.

I should scarcely be justified in concluding this chapter, if I did not first suggest, for the benefit of some, who may recoil from this profoundly earnest truth of sacrifice, as one that rather shocks, than approves itself

to, their feeling, that it is a kind of truth not likely to be realized, without experience. It will seem to be a truth overdrawn, unless it is drawn out of the soul's own consciousness, at least in some elementary degree. Some theologians, I fear, will not be taken by it, because it has never sufficiently taken hold of them. Mere understanding is an element too sterile and dry to know this kind of truth—it seems to be no truth at all, but a pietistic straining rather after something better than anybody can solidly know.

Experience wanted to know this truth of sacrifice.

Let me stop then here, upon the margin of the subject, and without any thought of preaching to my reader who parts company with me thus early, put him on a practical experiment that will let him a great way farther into this first chapter of divine knowledge, than, as yet, he thinks it possible to go. The problem I would give you is this; viz., that you find how to practically bear an enemy, or a person whom you dislike, so as to be exactly satisfied and happy in your relationship. If you can stand off in disgust, or set yourself squarely against him in hatred, or revenge, then do it and bless yourself in it. If that is impossible, try indifference, turn your back and say, "let him go and fare as his deserts will help him." If there is no sweetness in this, as there certainly is none, then begin to pray for him, that he may have a better mind and that you may be duly patient with him. This will be softer, and you may begin to feel that you are a good deal Christian or Christian-like, towards him. And yet there will be a

certain dryness in your feeling, as if you had only come into the formality of good. Then go just one step farther—take the man upon your love, bear him and his wrong as a mind's burden, undertake for him, study by what means and by what help obtained from God, you can get him out of his evils, and make a friend of him—God's friend and yours—do this and see if it does not open to you a very great and wonderful discovery—the sublime reality and solidly grand significance of vicarious sacrifice. Christ will be no more any stone of stumbling in it, the truth itself no more an offense, or extravagance; for you now have in your heart, what is no stone at all, but a living and self-evidencing grace by which to solve it. The offense of the cross—how surely is it ended, when once you have learned the way in which God bears an enemy! The quarrels of the head will be smoothed away how soon, by the simple methods of a wise and loving heart. The recoil you were in is over. In the problem how to bear an enemy you have found your Gethsemane and sounded for yourself the tragic depths of good—depths of joyful as of sorrow-burdened feeling—and so you understand how easily, believe in what glorious evidence, the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus for the sins of the world.

CHAPTER II.

THE ETERNAL FATHER IN VICARIOUS SACRIFICE.

It has been a fatal source of difficulty and mental confusion, as regards the vicarious sacrifice and saving work of Christ, that it has been taken to be a superlative kind of goodness; a matter of sacrifice outside of all the common terms and principles of duty or holy obligation; an act, or enterprise of self-sacrifice, not provided for in the universal statutes and standards of moral perfection. The assumption has been that Christ went out of obligation, out of law and beyond, to do the sacrifice, and was just so much better than perfect in good, because he would have been perfect in good, if he had declined the undertaking. Thus it has been a formally asserted point of theology, that his undertaking was "optional;" that which he might, or might not assume, and which, if he had chosen to decline, would have raised no sense of defect before his own standards of excellence. This too has been taken for a point fundamental, as regards the satisfaction for sins accomplished in his death, that he raised a superlative merit in it to be set to our account, only by doing optionally what he was under no obligation, on his own account, to do. What he ought to do for him-

self, or in his own obligation, could not avail for us, but only for himself. What he did, or suffered beyond this, was a merit in excess, that could be and was accepted for our justification, or the substitution of our just punishment.

Every such attempt to scheme the work of Christ, and put him in the terms of the understanding, begins, we ought easily to see, by removing him beyond all terms of understanding. Hence the painful confusion of ideas, the artificial mock speculations, the conclusions that are shocking to all natural sentiments of right and justice—the imputations that are figments, of merits that are inconceivable, accomplishing satisfactions with God that are as far as possible from satisfying men—all which have infested, for so many centuries, the history of this great subject. Plainly enough we can mean nothing, by a merit that is outside of all our standards of merit. If Christ was consenting, optionally, to what he might as well have declined; if he was just so much better than he ought to be on his own account; then the surplus over is any thing, or nothing; we may call it merit, but we do not know what it is; we may balance it against the sins of the world, but we can not be sure of a grain's weight in it. What can we think, or know, of a goodness over and above all standards of good? We might as well talk of extensions beyond space, or truths beyond the true. Goodness, holy virtue, is the same in all worlds and beings, measured by the same universal and eternal standards; else it is nothing to us. Defect is sin; over

The fiction of a superlative merit.

plus is impossible. God himself is not any better than he ought to be, and the very essence and glory of his perfection is, that he is just as good as he ought to be. Nay it is the glory of our standards of goodness themselves, that they are able to fashion, or construct, all that is included in the complete beauty of God.

Here then is our first point, when we attempt the cross and sacrifice of Christ; we must bring every thing back under the common standards of eternal virtue, and we must find Christ doing and suffering just what he ought, or felt that he ought, neither more nor less That which is to be intelligible must be found within the bounds of intelligence. If we can not find a Saviour under just our laws of good, we shall find him nowhere. Looking for him here, we shall not fail to find him.

Do we then assume that Christ, in his vicarious sacrifice, was under obligation to do and suffer just what he did? Exactly this. Not that he was under obligations to another, but to himself. He was God, fulfilling the obligations of God; just those obligations in the eternal fulfillment of which God's perfections and beatitudes are eternally fashioned. We transgressors had no claims upon him, more than our enemies have upon us; there was none above him to enforce such obligations. All that he endures in feeling under them, he endures freely, and this it is that constitutes both his greatness and joy. There is an eternal cross in his virtue itself, and the cross that he endures in Christ only reveals what is in those common standards of good, which are also eternally his.

Christ fulfilling standard obligations.

I shall discuss this matter more fully, at a more advanced stage in the argument. For the present I prefer to handle the subject in a manner less speculative, showing that, as Christ is here discovered in vicarious sacrifice, so all good beings, God in the Old Testament before Christ, the Holy Spirit in the times after Christ, and the good created minds both before and after, are and are to be, in one accord with Christ, enduring the same kind of sacrifice. It will seem, it may be, that I am going a long way round in such a canvassing, but the result will be that a platform is gained, where the sacrifice of Christ is at once less peculiar and far more intelligible. Indeed when it is made plain, as a fact of holy Scripture slumbering hitherto in its bosom and hidden from adequate discovery, that vicarious sacrifice is the common property of holy virtue in all minds, uncreated or created, the problem of such sacrifice will be effectually changed, and most of the questions in issue will be superseded, or already settled. This present and the two succeeding chapters will accordingly be occupied with a Scripture review, as in reference to the point stated.

All good beings in this law of sacrifice.

If it be true that love is a principle of vicarious sacrifice, then it will be so, not in Christ only, but as truly in God the Supreme, or the God of revelation previous to Christ's coming. I say "as truly" it will be observed, not of course that he will have done, or endured, the same things. Not even Christ did the same things in his

The Supreme Father in vicarious sacrifice.

first year as in his last, and yet he was just as truly burdened with our evils and suffering in our lot; for the main suffering of Jesus was not, as many coarsely imagine, in the pangs of his body and cross, but in the burdens that came on his mind. In these burdens God, as the Eternal Father, suffered before him. He had his times and eras appointed, his conditions of preparation, his modes of progress, and the incarnate work was to be done only in the incarnate era; but the design was nevertheless one and the same throughout, and was carried on in the same deep feeling and suffering sympathy, from the first. In the ante-Christian era, it may even have been one of the heaviest points of sacrifice, that there must be so long a detention, and that so great love must be unexpressed, till the fullness of time was come. So that, when Christ came it was even a kind of release, that the letting forth of so great love into healing, and sympathy, and cross, and passion, was now at last permitted.

God the same in the Old and New Testaments.

A great many persons have forced themselves into a false antagonism, by the contrast they have undertaken to raise between the Old Testament and the New.. And yet even such will agree, returning so far to the just opinion, that God is God every where, one and the same in all ages and proceedings, instigated by the same impulses, clothed in the same sympathies, maintaining the same patience, under the same burdens of love; acting, of course, in the Old Testament history, for the same ends of goodness that are sought in the New. They will

formally disclaim, too, the opinion that trinity supposes a distinction of characters in God, maintaining his strict homogeneity as pertaining to his strict unity. They go farther, they assert, as regards the infinite character, that God is love, that Christ came into the world, because God loved the world. Still further, when it is objected to their schemes of atonement, that they seem to imply an opinion that God is made gentler and more gracious by the sacrifice of Christ, they disclaim any such thought as that God is ever mitigated in his dispotions—the change, they say, is wrought in us, or in the conditions of public justice, by which God's pardons were restricted.

And yet the false antagonism just referred to remains. After all such disclaimers, it has power to feed and keep in vogue a whole set of false impressions, or prejudices, by which the God of the Old Testament becomes another and virtually different being from the Saviour of the New; a kind of Nemesis that needs to be propitiated by suffering, and is far as possible, in himself, from being in any relation of vicarious and burdened feeling for mankind. After the point of difficulty has been turned in their schemes of atonement, by the protestations referred to, they go their way, as if said protestations had no meaning at all, giving in to a kind of partisanship for one Testament against the other, and for one God against the other God. As some disciples took to Paul, and some to Apollos, so they take to Christ, and are much less drawn to the God of the law. There is no comfort in such a prejudice; they are consciously

troubled by it. They have a certain sense of something unworthy and false in the preference. It offends their reverence, it raises the suspicion of some latent superstition in their modes of thought and belief. And so it damages, not their peace only, but their piety itself. They never can think worthily of God, or serve him evenly and with satisfaction, as long as they regard his personal manifestations, with predilections that set him in virtual disagreement with himself.

All such predilections it will easily be seen are without foundation. On first principles they are and must be fictitious; for there is and can be no such thing as internal progress in God, that is in his character; he was never inferior to what he now is, and will never be superior—never worthier, greater, more happy, or more to be admired and loved. And yet there is certainly a considerable contrast in the ways of God, as presented in the Old Testament and in the Gospel of Christ. There he maintains a government more nearly political and earthly; here more spiritual and heavenly. There he calls himself a man of war; here he shows himself a prince of peace. There he is more legal, appealing to interest in the terms of this life; here he moves on the affections and covers the ground of eternity. There he maintains a drill of observances; here he substitutes the inspirations of liberty and the law written on the heart. There he operates oftener by force and by mighty judgments; here by the suffering patience of a cross.

No progress in God.

Laying hold of this contrast, and quite willing to

sharpen it by exaggerations, a great many, taking on the airs of philosophy, turn it, without any scruple of reverence, to the disadvantage or discredit of revelation. Affecting great admiration of Christianity, they declare that the God of the Old Testament is a lower being and not the same; a barbarian's God, a figment evidently of barbarism itself. And of those who class as believers, it results, in a different way already described, that many are afflicted in the feeling, that the God of the law is a God in justice and retributive will—doubtless good in some sense, but less amiable—and that Christ presents a better side of deity, to which they must instinctively cling, in a preference not to be restrained. They will even profess sometimes to find shelter in one, against the stormy judgments of the other.

What now shall we say to this? If God is one, a strict unity, always in the same perfect character and feeling, what account shall we make of this contrast? And by what method shall we make it appear that he is still the same, bearing the same relation of feeling to men's evils and sins, working in the same great principle of love and sacrifice?

The solution is not difficult, if only we make due account of the fact that, while there is no progress, or improvement, in God, there is and should be a progress in his government of the world. Taken as a plan of redemption and spiritual restoration, it must be historical and must be unfolded in and by a progressive revelation. Beginning at a point where men's ideas are low and their

But the government of God makes progress

spiritual apprehensions coarse, it must take hold of them, at the first, in such a way as they are capable of being taken hold of. What is political and legal, what appeals to interest and operates by stormy judgments, impressing God's reality by authority, and force, and fear, working chiefly on the outward state—breaking into the soul by breaking into the senses—will be most appropriate; nothing else in fact will get fit apprehension. There will not even be a language, at first, for the higher ideas of God and religion; such a language must be formed historically, under a growth of uses, generating gradually a growth of ideas. Thus if we conceive that holy virtue is constituted by a free obedience to law, the law will have to be set in first, by a drill of observances, and then, when it has been long enough enforced by a restrictive method, ideas may rise, inspirations come, and the soul may pass on to seize in liberty, what it has bowed to in fear. This holds true of every man, and, in a certain broader sense, historically, of a people or a world. The day of ideas, thoughts, sentiments, words quickened to a spiritual meaning, must of necessity come after, and be prepared by a long and weary drill in rites, institutions, legalities and heavy-laden centuries of public discipline. But God will be the same in this day as in that, in that as in this, cherishing the same purpose, moving on the senses, out of the same feeling, in the schoolmastering era of law, as in the grace of the cross itself. Becoming, at the first, in a certain sense, a barbarian people's God, he only submits to conditions of necessity by

which he is confronted, in preparing to be known, as the God of love and sacrifice, and Saviour of the world. Neither is it any discredit to him that the subjects of his goodness must be manipulated outwardly and roughly, and brought on thus historically, till some higher capabilities of feeling and perception are developed.

To simplify the general subject as far as possible, take, for example, the single point in which the hasty and shallow thinkers of the unbelieving world have been most commonly scandalized; viz., the exclusiveness of the old religion. God, they insist, is the Creator, Lord, and Father, of all men—not of any one people; but this old religion holds him forth in promise as the God of a chosen people, taking them as clients in specialty, apart from, and, in some sense, against the whole world beside. How very unlike to the God of Christianity, erecting a kingdom of universal love and suffering sacrifice. And yet plainly there was no other way to get hold of the low sentiment of the world and raise it, but to begin thus with a partisan, chosen people's mercy, and get himself revealed by light and shade, as between his people and others; creating a religion that is next thing to a prejudice. He could not be revealed, as any one may see, in his own measures, but only in such measures as he found prepared. To bolt himself into men's thoughts, when they had no thoughts, was impossible. He could only come into such thoughts and sentiments as there were. The little, darkened, partisan soul must know him as

Partisanship of the old religion.

it can, and not as he is. The nations, too, of that day boasted each a god of their own, whom they took and praised, for what he could do for them, and against the gods of the other nations. A god was no god who could not perch on their banners, and fight out their wars, trampling all other gods by his power. Hence the necessity that Jehovah should choose him a people. And so it was that by overtopping all other deities, in his glorious protectorship, he finally made himself known as God over all—the true Supreme and Saviour of all.

If he had announced himself, at the very first, as the God alike and Saviour of all men, if he had been forthwith incarnate and had shown himself in Moses' day, by the suffering life and death of his Son, the history would have been a barren riddle only. They were not equal to the conceiving of any such disinterested sacrifice; and the fact that it proposed a salvation for all men would have been enough, by itself, to quite turn away their faith. I verily believe that Jesus, coming, thus and then, would not even have been remembered in history. And yet there was a promise, long before, of which nobody took the meaning, that, in this one people, somehow, all nations should be eventually blessed; and the prophets, too, as the religious sense grew more enlarged, finally began to break out in bold and strong visions of a universal kingdom and glory; in which it may be seen that God was preparing, even from the first, to be finally known as the Lord and Saviour of the whole world.

Does he then, by condescending to the lowness of barbarous mind, and consenting to begin with a religion of prejudice, when there was no higher sentiment to begin with, or be revealed in—does he by choosing out one people, in this manner, show that his character is equal to nothing higher? Ah, what struggles of suffering patience had he rather to endure, in these long ages of training, under such narrow and meager possibilities! Nowhere else, it seems to me, not even in the cross of Jesus itself, does he reveal more wonderfully the greatness and self-sacrificing patience of his feeling. And the fact breaks out, all along down the course of the history—appearing and reappearing, by how many affecting declarations—that he is waiting for a better possibility, waiting to open his whole heart's love, and be known by what he can bear and do for the world of mankind. Nor was there any moment of relief to him so blessed probably, as when he came to Mary with his "all hail," and broke into the world as God with us; God now come at last, to disburden his heart by sacrifice. The retention before was a greater burden on his feeling, we may well believe, than his glorious outbirth into loss and suffering now.

God's love suffers by detention.

Taking now this very crowded, insufficiently stated solution of his relation to the times of the Old Testament, you will find it borne out, in every point, by a careful review of the whole Scripture; and that Christ, in his vicarious sacrifice, only represents the feeling of God in all the preceding ages.

God in sacrifice by Scripture testimony.

The principle of love, as we have already seen, is itself a principle of vicarious sacrifice, causing every one that is in it to be entered into the want, woe, loss, and even ill-desert of every other; bearing even adversaries and enemies, just as Christ bore his. But God is love and is so declared in every part of the Scripture; and what have we in this, but the discovery that he is a being, in just such a relation of sympathy and burdened feeling for men, as Christ was. He did not show it by the same outward signs, and therefore could not so powerfully and transformingly impress the fact; and yet he was in the same precise love, waiting, as we just now said, to find relief in a more adequate expression. Yet how often, how affectingly, did he express, in words, the painful sympathy and deep burden of his feeling. As when the prophet says—"In their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and pity, he redeemed them, and bare and carried them, all the days of old." How tenderly does he watch the turning of the ages—"grieved forty years" for his people in the wilderness—"rising betimes" to send his messengers—protesting that he is "weary"—that he is "broken with their whorish heart"—"that he is filled with repentings"—calling also to his people to see how "the Lord their God bare them as a man doth bear his son"—apostrophizing them, as it were, in a feeling quite broken, "Oh, that there were such a heart in them, that they would hear me and keep my commandments"—"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim, how shall I deliver thee, Israel?"—and

again, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee." It is as if there were a cross unseen, standing on its undiscovered hill, far back in the ages, out of which were sounding always, just the same deep voice of suffering love and patience, that was heard by mortal ears from the sacred hill of Calvary.

And then, when Christ himself arrives, what does he say but that, "God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son?"—not that he came to obtain God's love, but that God's love sent him and was here to be magnified, in the sacrifice of life he would make. And who is Christ but God manifest in the flesh, reconciling the world unto himself; the express image and word of God; that is God expressed as he is, so that he that hath seen him hath seen the Father; working always for, and to declare, the God that sent him. Neither does he conceive, that he is introducing a new kingdom and order, that is worthier of God, and in better feeling. He declares that he came not to destroy the old system, or law, but only to fulfill it and carry it on to the glorious realization of its ends, opening things that have been kept secret, but have all the time been working, from the foundation of the world; nay, that his kingdom is a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world; prepared that is in God's love, fixed in his purpose, working in his counsels. What then was Christ in his vicarious feeling and sacrifice, what in his Gethsemane, but a revelation in time, of just that love that had been struggling always in God's bosom; watch-

ing wearily for the world and with inward groanings unheard by mortal ears?

But there is, after all, some one will say, a something in Christ that is more gentle and better to feeling—less severity, kinder, softer terms of good. There certainly is a fuller, more adequate expression of God's love; and so a greater power of attraction, thus of salvation. And yet there are denunciations of future evil in his teachings, that, taken as they stand, are as much more fearful than any which are found in the Old Testament, as they relate to what is more future and of longer duration. I will not here discuss them, I only say that, take what view of them is possible, it does not appear that Christ, in bearing the world's evil, does at all consent to the possible immunity of transgression. If he might consent to that, then he might well enough consent to the continuance of transgression also, and so be excused from the sacrifice of the cross altogether.

Christ not better, but a more adequate expression.

God then is such a being from eternity as must, by the supposition, be entered, even as Christ was, into all that belongs to love; entered into patience, long suffering, and sacrifice; burdened in heart for the good of enemies; taking on his feeling the wants and woes of enemies. This is no new thought, no optional, superlative goodness taken up by Christ in the year One, of the Christian era; but the whole deity is in it, in it from eternity. And the short account of all is—"For God so loved the world."

God then is just what Christ shows him to be.

Holding now this view of God—the same which the Psalmist boasts when he sings, "For God is my king of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth"—we encounter a large body of current misconceptions, mostly under Gospel terms of expression, which require to be modified if we are to hold the truth understandingly.

Current misconceptions.

Thus we speak of Christ as a mediator, and as doing a work of mediation; which is Scriptural, but we often conceive that he is literally a third being, coming in between us and God to compose our difficulty with him, by gaining him as it were to softer terms. But he is no such mediator at all, nor any mediator, such as does not leave him to be God manifest in all God's proper feeling. No, he is a mediator only in the sense that, as being in humanity, he is a medium of God to us; such a medium that, when we cling to him in faith, we take hold of God's own life and feeling as the Infinite Unseen, and are taken hold of by him, reconciled, and knit everlastingly to him, by what we receive.

Mediation.

We call Christ our intercessor, too, and conceive that we are saved by his intercession. Does he then intercede for us in the sense that he goes before God in a plea to gain him over to us, showing God his wounds, and the print of his nails, to soften him towards us. Far from that as posssible; nothing could be more unworthy. Intercession means literally intervention, that is a coming between; and it is not God that wants to be softened, or made better; for Christ

Intercession.

himself is only the incarnate love and sacrificing patience of God; but the stress of the intercession is with us and in our hearts' feeling—all which we simply figure, objectively, when we conceive him as the priest that liveth ever to make intercession for us. We set him before God's altar, in a figure of eternal sponsorship, urging the suit of peace; though the peace he obtains by the suit of his sacrifice, comes, in fact, from our mitigation, not from the mitigation of God.

Pacification.

Other modes of speaking, supposed to be understood in their Scriptural meaning, will not be accomodated by the conception that unites the God of the old time and the Christ of the new, in the same vicarious feeling, but will require to have their colors softened by similar explanations. And it will not be difficult, I rejoice to believe, for any genuinely thoughtful, right-feeling soul, to lay hold of the possibility thus offered, of a conception of God that does not mock his attributes, or set them at war with each other. How distracting and painful, how dreadfully appalling is the faith that we have a God, back of the worlds, whose indignations overtop his mercies, and who will not be satisfied, save as he is appeased by some other, who is in a better and milder feeling. We might easily fear him, but how shall we love him; and where, meantime shall we find that glorious, all-centering unity in the good, which our sufficiently distracted soul longs for in the God of its worship? What can we do as sinners, torn already by our own evils, with two Gods, a less good, and a better—this latter, suffering and even dying

to compose and sweeten the other? Where shall our heart rest when our thought itself is bent hither and thither, and torn by a God in no unity with Himself?

Here then I think we may rest in the full and carefully tested discovery, that whatever we may say, or hold, or believe, concerning the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, we are to affirm in the same manner of God. The whole deity is in it, in it from eternity and will to eternity be. We are not to conceive that our blessed Saviour is some other and better side of deity, a God composing and satisfying God; but that all there is in him expresses God, even as he is, and has been of old—such a being in his love that he must needs take our evils on his feeling, and bear the burden of our sin. Nay, there is a cross in God before the wood is seen upon Calvary; hid in God's own virtue itself, struggling on heavily in burdened feeling through all the previous ages, and struggling as heavily now even in the throne of the worlds. This, too, exactly, is the cross that our Christ crucified reveals and sets before us. Let us come then not to the wood alone, not to the nails, not to the vinegar and the gall, not to the writhing body of Jesus, but to the very feeling of our God and there take shelter. Seeing how God bears an enemy—has borne or carried enemies all the days of old—we say "Herein is Love," and in this grand *koinonia*—this fellowship of the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ—our very unworthy and very distracting preferences are forever merged and lost.

A cross in God's perfections from eternity.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN VICARIOUS SACRIFICE.

HAVING showed, in my last chapter, that the Creator and God of the former dispensation, sometimes called the Father in that relation, was inserted into our human conditions, in just the same vicarious feeling as Christ was in his incarnate suffering, and bore our sins as truly, and wrestled for us in the same tender burdens of love, I now undertake to show the same in respect to the Holy Spirit after Christ; that he works in love as Christ did, and suffers all the incidents of love—compassion, wounded feeling, sorrow, concern, burdened sympathy, violated patience—taking men upon him, to bear them and their sins, precisely as Christ himself did in his sacrifice. He is, in fact, a Christ continued, in all that distinguishes the offering and priesthood of Christ, and is fitly represented in the same way, under a priestly figure, as our intercessor.

I am well aware how very distant all such conceptions are from the commonly received impressions of the Holy Spirit. For it is a remarkable fact, apart from all conceptions of a properly vicarious sacrifice in his ministry, that even where his personality is much insisted on, almost nothing is left him commonly in the matter of

The Holy Spirit personal in feeling and character.

feeling and character, that belongs to personality. Probably enough the reason may be that when we pray, as we familiarly do, that God will send, or give, the Holy Spirit; or shed down, or shed abroad, or pour out, or breathe the Holy Spirit; we allow such figures to carry their meaning too literally, and so fall into the way of regarding him, unwittingly, as a mere influence; some invisible missive, or fluid, or magnetic force, traversing unseen, the hidden depths of souls, to work God's purpose in them. However this may be, it certainly comes to pass, somehow, that we practically lose out the conception of a genuinely personal character and life, as pertaining to the Holy Spirit. And, in this view, it becomes a matter of great spiritual consequence, apart from the particular subject I have in hand, to restore a juster and more vital conception of the Spirit, such as I am undertaking now to assert. I begin then by a distinct recognition—

1. Of the personality of the Spirit, insisting that, if it be asserted at all, as it certainly should be, it must be asserted with a meaning and not without. It is very true that the word *Spirit* [πνευμα] is a neuter noun, drawing after it the neuter pronoun *it*. But this is only because the natural symbol resorted to, viz., *breath*, happened to be a neuter word. Still there are other terms applied to the Spirit, which bear the very highest character of personality. Thus he is promised as being even Christ himself—"I will come to you;" and is called, with Christ, Paraclete, Advocate, Comforter, another Com-

Personality that makes no true person.

forter—and the personal pronoun *he* is applied to him, just as it is to the Father and the Son. I raise no question here upon the nature of this personality. I only say that he is a person, in just the same personal properties of feeling, love, sacrifice, as the Father and the Son, and that, being perfect in character, he must have exactly the same character. Besides, according to all right conceptions of trinity, God is still a strict unity, or undivided substance, not three substances; and so, on the score of unity, as before on the score of personality, the Holy Spirit must be more than a divine somewhat, emptied of all divine graces and perfections—the full and perfect God, even as that same fullness dwelt in Jesus bodily. The Holy Spirit works thus in a ministry of love precisely as Jesus did, and the love is just the same kind of love, burdened for men, burdened for enemies, heaving in silent agonies of passion to recover and save; fulfilling in every particular the Christly terms of sacrifice. Again—

2. It requires, every one may easily perceive, quite as much suffering patience, and affliction of feeling, or even of what is called passion, to carry on the work of the Spirit, as it did to fulfill the ministry and bear the cross of Jesus. In the first place, the work of the Spirit covers the whole ground of human life, broad as the world is, and continues through all the untold generations of time. And in this world-wide operation he is enduring, not Pilate, and the soldiers, and a few Jewish priests, but the contradiction of all sinners that live. He is betrayed by

The work of the Spirit is in sacrifice.

more then Judas, denied by more than Peter; struggling on, from age to age, with all the falsities, and treasons, and corruptions, all the unspeakable disgusts of all bosom perversity; acting, and suffering, not before them indeed as Christ did, but as it were in perpetual contact with them.

Neither let us imagine, as too many do, in their superficial haste, that the principal suffering and sacrifice of Christ consisted in the pains he bore in his body. The pains of his moral sensibility, the burdens that oppressed his vicarious feeling, cost him more than his cross, as any one may see who takes the meaning of his Gethsemane. Indeed this one look down into the depth of his divine feeling seems to have been permitted us, that our mind might be taken away from the foolish opinion that his principal sacrifice lay in the pangs of a few hours' bodily suffering. Indeed these bodily pains of Christ on the cross appear to be a kind of condescension rather to our coarseness, that he might raise an outward flag of distress for our dull sensuous nature to look upon; while to him, the principal woe is that which, as incarnate love, he bore all through his ministry, in his griefs, disgusts, and wounded sensibilities; that which once or twice he barely speaks of, as when he says "now is my soul troubled;" that which made him, to his friends, "a man of sorrows;" that which, in the garden, took hold of him, even as an agony, the most appalling scene of tragedy ever beheld in our world. In a quiet, silent hour, when his person is threatened by no appearance of danger, the wail of

his burdened heart breaks out in a way of intensity that is even terrible; while in his trial and mockery, and the bodily torture of his death, his serenity is more remarkable even than his distress. Perceiving thus how the real pain of Jesus, that which constituted the principal cost of his sacrifice, was the burden that lay upon his feeling, baffled and wronged as that feeling ever was, we are let into the precise conception of that equally heavy burden that is borne by the Spirit always. And this long, weary draft upon his patience, his disgusts, and wounded sensibilities—this it is that makes his intercession. We pass now—

3. To that which is to be more decisive than our own thoughts or constructive endeavors, viz., to the direct exhibitions of the Scripture itself. And here, since I must abridge the review as much as possible, I will pass all the more casual notifications of the Spirit which speak of doing him "despite," of his being "grieved," and "vexed," and "lied unto," and "resisted;" that show the eminently Christly "gifts of healing" ministered by him, allowing it also to be said of him as of Christ—"Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses;" that call him "Christ," and "the Spirit of Christ," and "Christ dwelling in us," and "Christ living in us"—in all which it is made clear that he has all the sentiment, and sensibility, and even wounded sensibility, of Christ himself—Christ's equivalent in short, abiding in the heart.

Scripture representations.

Having merely alluded to these very significant tokens, I go on to notice three principal conceptions

under which the intercessory character and feeling of the Spirit are specially displayed.

Thus, first of all, he goes into the ministry of Christ with him and upon him, as the qualifying impulse, in some sense, of his work; resting upon him as a dove in his baptism; leading him into and through the great soul-struggle of the temptation; bestowed upon him "without measure" in his doctrine; travailing with him, last of all, in his Gethsemane and his cross; so that we may say, when all is done, "who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God." Instigator thus, and upholder of Jesus, in all his ministry and sacrifice, how strange is the inversion we make, when we allow ourselves to think of him as being only a bare impersonal force or influence!

With Christ in his ministry.

A second and partly reverse, though really agreeing conception of the Spirit is met, in his appointed vicarship, or substituted ministry, acting in the place of Christ himself. Thus Christ declaring to his disciples, "it is expedient for you that I go away," promises the Spirit as "another Comforter" in his place. And the reason of the substitution is not difficult. Having brought on his outwardly historic work to a close, Christ perceives that his permanent, or protracted stay in the flesh and before the senses, would be rather a hindrance than a help to farther progress. If it were possible for him, as a visible Saviour and resident, to win disciples all over the world and in all ages, they would yet be disciples

Takes Christ's place and continues his work.

not of faith, but of the eyes; aching still to see him, more than to be like him; thronging on to his seat as pilgrims over continents and seas; yet not one in a hundred of them ever getting near enough to speak with him; wanting all, of course, a visible kingdom since they have a visible king. Therefore he declares a change of administration—that the Christ of the eye is to be withdrawn, and the Spirit, an invisible, diffusive, pervasive, every where present, always abiding Christ substituted—a Christ whom no distance can remove, whom the sick man can have in his chamber, the prisoner in his dungeon, the exile in his place of banishment, the martyr in his fires; present to the heart, more present than looks, or words; present where the eye is blind and can not see him, and the ear is deaf and can not hear him speak. And yet he is to be the consciously felt Christ. "The world seeth me not but ye see me." "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father and ye in me and I in you." In him, as their living interpreter, present to consciousness in all the sentiment, love, sacrifice, of the Father and the Son, the disciples are always to know the ascended Lord of their hearts, and be kept in the sense of his society and even of his burdened sympathy itself.

Has his Gethsemane.

This brings us to a third Scripture conception of the Spirit, where the vicarious working is even more formally displayed *—"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit

* Rom. viii, 26–7.

itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that can not be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

Our translators appear to have looked upon it as a thing quite unsupposable, that any priestly and vicarious working pertains to the ministry of the Spirit, and have cast the words of their version accordingly, so as to make it a great deal less distinctly vicarious than the original. Besides it would be nearly impossible to so translate the passage as to give it, in English, the full vicarious typology and substitutive import of the original Greek version. Thus our English word *helpeth*—["helpeth our infirmities"]—represents a long Greek word compounded of two prepositions and a verb; the preposition *with* indicating a conjunction of sympathy, the preposition *instead of*, indicating substitution, and the verb *taking hold of* as in participation; * precisely the same verb in precisely the same phrase which is translated, "took our infirmities," † in the remarkable passage that declares the vicarious assumption of our bodily infirmities and evils by Christ; only there the verb is not intensified by the prepositions here compounded with it. Are we then to judge that a much stronger word of vicarious assumption is here to be emptied of every such import, and translated simply "helpeth" because it refers to the Holy Spirit?

Again it is to be specially noted that the Holy Spirit is twice represented in this passage under the priestly

* συναντιλαμβάνεται. † Matth. viii, 17.

figure of making intercession; the same which is applied to Christ in but a single instance, and becomes, in the estimation of many teachers, the very crowning doctrine of his mediatorship. Precisely how much, or what is to be understood by this *intercession*, as affirmed of Christ, it may be difficult to settle. The word means literally to *intervene for*, as when a friend intervenes between a superior and an inferior, to obtain some act of forgiveness, or help from the former. There is somewhat of a mediatorial character in the intervention, somewhat also of a vicarious character, inasmuch as the intervening or interceding party is supposed to have the case of the humbler and more dejected one upon his own feeling, and to be a volunteer bearer of his burden for him. In the case of the Spirit the vicarious, substitutive character of the intervention or intercession is grammatically intensified, when compared with the intercession ascribed to Christ, by the doubling of the preposition *for*, compounding it, first with the verb, and then placing it again before the noun or subject.* The intercession ascribed to Christ—"able also to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them"—plainly enough represents the reconciling work he is able to do in souls, under the objective and priestly figure of a perpetual offering to God, for the propitiation of God to them. The intercession of the Spirit on the other hand is subjectively conceived and not otherwise, for his ministry is

The priestly conception of his work.

* ὑπερεντυγχάνει ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν.

only subjective in men's hearts; it is the wrestling within of his own divine sympathy and suffering love, to raise them into accord with God's mind and the secret motions of his goodness; thus to give insight and power to their prayers, and draw them into all the secret helpings of God in a state of reconciliation.

All which he is said to do "with groanings which can not be uttered"—better "with groanings unuttered;" that is, with strivings of concern or burdened feeling, that are the silent Gethsemane of his ministry. The groanings of Christ are audible and so might the groanings of the Spirit be, if he had the vocal organs of a body connected with his feeling. Enough that one, as truly as the other, and both in exact conformity, fulfill the natural pathology of love and sacrifice; Christ when he throws himself upon the ground, groaning aloud for the mere burden he has upon his feeling, and without any other kind of distress; and the Spirit when he enters into the struggles of our disorder and weakness with so great concern, groaning inaudibly in us and heaving out our soul in sighs and prayers.

It is no small confirmation of the view thus given, that when it is carried forward into the latter of the two verses, all that awkwardness which the commentators appear to have felt, in assigning to it any precise meaning, is completely removed. Omitting the words "*will of*," which are not in the original, we read—"And he that [sought unto by prayer] searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit [the mind which the Spirit is working in us] because he [the Spirit] maketh

intercession for the saints [preparing a mind in them] according to God"—working that is from and toward just that counsel of vicarious love which has dwelt in the Godhead from eternity. God he infers—this is the strain of his argument—must certainly be in the secret of what proceeds from himself, and when fallen souls are wrought into that same mind by the Spirit, their prayers must be accepted and their footing of reconciliation established. In this manner do the Scriptures represent the Holy Spirit, in his vicarious work and office of intercession—bathing us inwardly in all Christly sympathy, bearing our burdens of weakness and sin, and groaning, as it were, his own longings for us into our prayers. At the same time it is to be admitted that there is a good deal of language applied to Christ and his work in the Scriptures which is not applied to the Holy Spirit; which also it is no part of my present subject to explain. I only say that it contemplates a difference in the offices of Christ and the Spirit, and their modes and kinds of operation. My present concern is simply to show that the Holy Spirit works in the same feeling as Christ did, bears the same burdens on his love, suffers the same wounded sensibility, encounters loss and sacrifice under the same vicarious impulse. I do not undertake to identify Christ and the Spirit in such a sense as to make them do the same things, or work by the same method. One operates outwardly, the other inwardly; one before the understanding, the other in it; one making impressions by what is acted before the senses and addressed to thought,

the other by groanings and throbs of divine feeling back of thought. This much, however, I will say, that if the sacrifices of the much enduring, agonizing spirit, were acted before the senses, in the manner of the incarnate life of Jesus, he would seem to make the world itself a kind of Calvary from age to age, and would just as impressively sanctify the law, by the perennial obedience of his sacrifices, as Christ did by the casual sacrifice of his cross. And this brings me to add—

4. That the reason why the Holy Spirit is regarded so much less tenderly by us than Christ, or even as having no particular title to our love, is that we are creatures in the senses, carnalized also and blinded, as regards all spiritual perceptions, by the sensuous habit of our sin, and that Christ meeting us in the senses, speaking to us with a man's voice, enduring toil and contempt for us, joining himself to us in all our external adversities, looking on us with a face gloomed by sorrow, or bathed in the sweat of agony, or stained by the blood of his thorny crown and cross—meeting us in this way, having a human person for his organ, Christ lays hold of our feeling, by his address to the senses, and we begin to imagine some special tenderness and fellow sensibility in him, awakened by his human relationship itself, and dating after that relationship began. Whereas he has only come into humanity because the feeling was in him before, and has taken up the human nature, that he might have an organ of what before was hid, unexpressed, in his divine feeling. And so the Holy Spirit,

Only does not meet us in the senses.

coming after, comes in that same feeling, tempered to just the same pitch of vicarious sacrifice for men. Jesus is not better than the Father, nor better than the Spirit, his substitute. We think so, if at all, only because we see him with our eyes; and he is put before our eyes, in the flesh, for the very purpose of expressing to us adequately what is in the Everlasting Godhead, unvoiced to feeling in us hitherto, unexpressed by look, or form, or act, or agony. Could we make the still small voice of the Spirit audible, could we bring into sound the groanings unuttered, could we invest the Spirit in our hearts with a look that is the fit expression of his sensibility, and feel the tears of his divine pity dropping on the face of our sin, how evident would it be made to us, that we have, in him, the true Christ-passion, living always in the secret center of our life; the very same that we had visibly before us, in the tender ministries and suffering graces of the Son of Mary.

Perhaps it may be necessary to add, that the Holy Spirit in such a ministry of sacrifice and burdened feeling, holds the magisterial key of divinity still, and makes it none the less a piercing and strong ministry. He is just like Christ in this respect. The tenderness and self-sacrificing love of Christ never subsided into softness, or a look of weakness. Authority goes with him. He lays himself upon the proud, the plunderers of the poor, the pretenders and hypocrites in religion, in words of fearful severity. He is kingly even in his passion. And in just the same manner the Spirit has thunders for guilty con-

Works in authority also.

sciences, none the less terrible, that, like his groanings, they are inaudible; scourges of rods to lay upon the backs of all defiant sins; fiery-pointed arrows of conviction to hurl among the drowsy fears, and awake them out of their sleep. He sharpens the soul's hunger, stirs it up to self-disgust, kindles aspiration, strikes the bell of time and makes it ring the note of flying years. A faithful and strong Spirit, he can also be a piercing and severe Spirit. The vicarious love makes him none the less a king, and the kingdom of God he establishes within none the less truly a kingdom. In a word, he bears the whole divine character into his ministry; and brings it in upon our hearts' presence as a revelation there of God's full majesty. Adding this for safeguard, our conclusion is that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is as truly a ministry of suffering and vicarious sacrifice as that of Christ himself.

I can not drop the subject in hand without adverting to a great and very hurtful misconception of the Gospel plan itself, that connects with this same misconception of the Holy Spirit which I am here trying to correct. Thus how very commonly is it given as a true summation of the Gospel, that Christ, by his death and sacrifice, prepares a ground of forgiveness or justification, and then that the Holy Spirit is sent by a kind of immediate, or efficient agency, to renew the soul in a forgivable state. Christ works before the law, and the Holy Spirit works in the soul; one to open a gate of mercy, the other to lead into that gate. As if Christ, in his agony, and cross, and

A mechanical Gospel which is not the true.

all the feeling of his most feeling and beautiful ministry, were not engaged to be a reconciling power in souls, at all, but only to set himself before God's justice, and his just retributions, buying their silence by his pains; whereupon the Holy Spirit, a very good being doubtless, though doing nothing specially here by goodness, is sent forth, in adequate force, to be the great Regenerator. The regeneration accordingly is not a point won by any Gospel siege of love and sacrifice, but carried by mighty impressment rather, much as if by some unseen hydrostatic pressure, or some silent gun-shot stroke of omnipotence. These sapless timbers! these fleshless, nerveless bones! how sad a figure do they make of the Gospel, where the true Christ and Spirit come together, in love and sacrifice, to beget us in holiness, by the longings felt of their joint passion in our hearts.

It results, of course, under such a conception of the Gospel plan, that we are drawn to no very close personal union either with Christ, or the Spirit, and just that is missed which, in God's view, is the principal aim of all; viz., the power to be exerted in us by the feeling expressed to us. For if Christ, in what is called his vicarious sacrifice, is wholly withdrawn from us, and is only doing a work before justice and the law, in some court of reckoning we know not where, he is plainly doing nothing to win a place in our consciousness, or to produce a Christly consciousness in us. He does not move upon us, but upon the books, thinking only of the credit to be gained for us there by the contribution of his pains. How then is he going to be

formed in us? And by what conceivable method are we to have him inwardly revealed, and to say, as the conscious witness of our hearts, Christ liveth in us? However good and great the work he is doing among the retributive economies for us, he is not here for the doing specially of any thing in us.

Meantime the Spirit is reduced to an attitude where we are unlikely as may be, to conceive any such thing as the greatness and blessedness of a conscious, everlastingly established friendship with him. He is not here, to reach us, in any sense, by the divine feeling. He is not Christ taken out of form and locality, to be present everywhere and be revealed, unseen, as a Christ living in all hearts. But he is thought of more as an efficient divine operator in souls; doing a work of repair in them, or, at most, a work of moral suasion before their choices; neither of which is very much related to our personal sentiments and the engagement of our love to his character. We think of him as of some impersonal force, some hidden fire, some holy gale, not as a friend present in sympathy or wounded feeling, to every throb of our hearts; disgusted by sensuality and passion, pained by vanity, offended by pride, grieved by neglect, hurt by unbelief and all worldly inclinings; our eternal counselor, guide, helper, stay; such a Spirit as, living in us, keeps the sensibilities even of Gethsemane and the passion in immediate contact with our inmost life. How great value and power there might be in such a conception is obvious. What mindfulness, what delicate reverences and exact

The Spirit our invisible friend.

loyalty of living would it require, and how dear the confidence it would support. Whether it be a relation more fearful or tender, more humble or lofty, more careful or inspiring, I hardly know; it is every thing great, beautiful, tender, holy, powerful. Losing the sense of such a Spirit and of such a personal friendship with him, we seem to lose every thing. He is our other Comforter, our second Christ; and when we lose our faith in him, or hold him but dimly, we are just so far reduced to an experience that is orphanage—even as Christ himself conceived when he said, "I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you."

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOOD ANGELS IN VICARIOUS SACRIFICE.

It has been a great hindrance, we have seen, to all right conceptions of what is called the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ, that the attempt has been kept up, so persistently, to solve it as a matter one side of all the common principles of duty—a superlative goodness, too good to be obligatory on Christ, or any one else; an optional sacrifice, when undertaken by him, that overtops all requirement and makes a virtue better than even perfect law can frame a notion of. And so, by a kind of prodigious goodness above his obligation, Christ raises a fund of surplus merit, to even the account of all the world's wrong doing under obligation. There ought to be some difficulty in getting well through any such kind of solution; for after all the principles of duty, or virtue, have been thrown into confusion, no rule is left to work by, in the settlement of any thing.

In this view, or on this account, I have undertaken to show the universality of just what we discover most distinctly in the work and sacrifice of Christ; that every good being, just according to his degree in good, will bear evil beings and suffer in feeling for them and take

as it were, their bad lot on himself; that, as Christ did it, so did the Father before Christ in the dispensation of the Old Testament; also that the Holy Spirit, after Christ, is continually doing it, in his continued work of intercession. Vicarious action, feeling, suffering, therefore, is not peculiar to the Son, but is even from eternity in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and in one as truly as in the others.

All good intelligences in vicarious sacrifice.

What I now propose is to carry the same conclusion a degree farther, or to bring it a step nearer down to us; viz., to show that all holy beings created are in exactly the same vicarious spirit and suffering way of love as Christ was, only not doing and suffering exactly the same things. This may seem, in one view, to signify little as regards the extension of my subject; for if the uncreated three are in the very same love as Christ from eternity, bearing for love's sake all the burdens of all enemies, and suffering a Gethsemane in feeling on their account, it of course adds nothing as regards authority, to show, that all created subjects, the glorified men, the angels and seraphim of the heavenly worlds, are also in the same. But we are looking, it must be observed, not after authority, but after commonness, or a common platform of principles in vicarious sacrifice; and therefore it signifies even the more to find all the holy intelligences of God's empire in it, with Him, and with Christ; for it brings the Christly sacrifice down just so much closer to our human ranges of life and character, and our common obligations of duty and sac-

rifice. It shows, in fact, that Christ's vicarious action is no prodigious matter, no monstrosity of goodness, but that all created holy beings have their perfection and blessedness in the same.

On this point we have several distinct modes of evidence.

1. A negative evidence, created by the impossibility of assuming the contrary. Nothing would more certainly shock our conceptions of glorified minds, or of what is proper to their holy character, than to hear it affirmed that they are ignorant of sacrifice, never afflicted for the want, or woe, or fall of others; that, in fact, they would never think of being burdened with concern for an enemy, or of bearing any loss or sacrifice for his sake. Is that the kind of virtue, or character, that distinguishes the glorified state? Is it by such minds, in such a spirit, that Christ is to be appreciated, and is it such that are to have their joy in society with him?

Shocking to think otherwise.

2. It is agreed that angels and all glorified minds are in the principle and life of love; and love in angels works according to its own nature, as truly as it does in God or in Christ; for it is a power universally that takes hold of its objects and of all their woes, wants, wrongs and even enmities, to bear them as a weight on its afflicted sympathies. As certainly, therefore, as the angels and good minds of the upper world are fixed in the sway of love, they will run out their sympathies to others

Their love puts them in a way of sacrifice.

and will burden their hearts with concern for the unworthy and the wicked; ministering unseen, where they may, in warnings and secret guidances. If they are in Christ's love, they will have a Gethsemane and a cross in that love, and will be fulfilling their unseen ministry in the same key with his.

3. It signifies much that they are drawn to Christ with such evident sympathy, and are with him so constantly, at every stage, and in every principal crisis of his work. The interest they have in him is visibly toned and tempered, by their common interest with him in his objects. Ages before his coming, they are moved with mighty expectation, "desiring to look into these things." "Highly favored! blessed among women!" is the eager and strongly reverent salutation they bring to Mary's mortal womanhood. When the child is born, they break into the sky, filling it full of heavenly hymn—"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace." In his temptation, they crowd about him to support him by their ministry. In his agony, one comes to strengthen him. In his trial, he is sure that he can have twelve legions to help him. They watch by the tomb where he sleeps; they roll away the stone when he wakes; and sitting there, one at the head and another at the feet, in forms more glorious than sculptured stones, they mark the now vacant place of his rest. With a delicate reverence, they tenderly fold the napkin that was about his head and the linen clothes, and lay them by themselves; and they say to Mary, with what tenderness,

Their sympathy with Christ shows them to be.

and, as it were, tearful homage, "Come see the place where the Lord lay." Almost, of course, they are with him in his ascension, when his work of sacrifice is done, and he goes up in the train of their innumerable company.

All these, now, as I readily admit, are rather indications than positive proofs. And yet there is such a zeal in their sympathy as indicates no partial accord, but a thoroughly complete oneness with him. Appearing most punctually when he sinks lowest in sacrifice, flocking to him in his agony and always when his soul is troubled, what can we imagine but that they suffer with him; pained for his enemies even as he is, and bearing the same burdens for them? Otherwise their sympathy itself could be scarcely better than an offense to his feeling. But there is a more direct kind of evidence—

4. In the ministry they maintain themselves; for they have a ministry, side by side with that of Jesus, in which we may see distinctly what and how much of sacrifice they are able to bear, and do in fact bear, for mankind. I am well aware of the general unbelief or practical Sadduceeism, as regards "angel and spirit," that is likely to impose a look of myth or hollow fantasy, on any thing which can be said of the angelic ministries of the Scripture. Any appeal made to them in a matter of argument is likely to bear a specially unsolid, or even flighty and visionary character, in the estimation of such as think they believe in them, and would even be offended by the intimation that they really do not.

Their ministry is in Christ's way of sacrifice.

I can not stop to argue the question of such ministries. I will only suggest that I am discussing a purely Scriptural matter, on grounds of Scripture evidence, and that such ministries are not heartily believed, probably because the supposed visitants are taken to be only phantasms, or apparitions, and not real beings. For if there be any thing in our doctrine of immortality, there ought to be a world of real intelligences and glorified minds outside of this; beings that have a character, as truly as we ourselves expect to have, and that, having a character, will have sympathies and a disposition to be occupied in good works; beings, many of them, who have gone out from our own human society, and are bound to it by the dearest affinities of love and customary friendship, and will want to be engaged, if possible, in ministries of good to others left behind. Let it also be noted, that they are represented as ministering only to the heirs of salvation; that is to such as are fenced away from their invisible access by no contrary affinities; for it may be that all good minds have immediate access to such as are good, and that no conditions of sense, or walls of distance, ever shut apart, or in the nature of things can, such as, in God's love, are made inherently common to each other. Besides, how completely will it take away the fantastic look of these celestial brethren and their visitations, just to conceive them as coming into the world, because they are pressed by the same love as Christ was, and drawn, by the sublime necessity of their own perfect character, to bear our lot of shame and loss, in a similar extension of their suffering sympathy.

This now we shall find is the exact conception held of them at all points in the representations of Scripture. Some of them we are expressly taught, and we know not how many, are men, or the spirits of men, once living on earth; just as soundly real as they ever were, or as we ourselves are to day. And what is more they are only acting in character, precisely the same kind of character which they lived in as members of our race. They were men who bore great burdens of toil and suffering for the people of their times, and only learned to bear them in that manner for the people of all times. They found a cross in their virtue itself, even as Christ did, and all that we discover, in their ministries among us now, is that they have not forgotten their cross, or grown tired of it.

The Scripture shows them as in sacrifice.

Thus we are expressly informed that the angels of the transfiguration are Moses and Elias; and they spake with him, most naturally, of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. By which we are to understand, not that they informed him of his crucifixion, for that he knew already, but they joined their feeling to his, and comforted him by their suffering sympathy, and the assured sympathy of the heavenly worlds. For which, too, they had been effectually trained by their own former trials and burdens of love on earth; Moses when he cried, sinking under such burdens, "I can not bear this people," and Elias when he groaned underground in his cave, "I have been very jealous for the Lord of Hosts." And who was that angel in John's

vision who said, "I am of thy brethren the prophets?" Was it Daniel who fasted in such broken plaints of sorrow for his people and country? or was it Jeremiah who cried, "O that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears?" All these, and other such holy men of old, had borne the cross of love in their time, and have not forgotten it, now that they are classed as angels. The ministries they fulfill are only their old ministries enlarged and made perfect. They lived in vicarious sacrifice before they went up, and the tragic joy they had in it draws them to it now.

Meantime we shall find that, in all which is told us of these angelic ministries, they are set in close analogy with the ministry of Christ himself. They are with Hagar by the fountain of the wilderness, as Christ with the woman at Jacob's well. They are with Elijah the starving prophet in his sleep under the juniper tree, offering him their cake which they have baked upon the coals, even as Christ prepared his fire of coals, and the fish and the bread, that his hungry friends, on landing from their boats, might receive the token of his divine hospitality. They had such a feeling of tender sympathy for innocent children, coming forth into a rough world of sin and sorrow, that they took hold, every one, of some one child, or more than one, to become their unseen guardians—"Verily I say unto you their angels do always behold the face of my father"—even as the incarnate Lord himself clave to the children everywhere, and laid his hands and his dear blessing on them, saying—"of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

How deeply their feeling is entered into the great tragedy of sin, and all the lost conditions of the fallen state under sin, we may see, on a large scale, when they are shown, before the great salvation promised has arrived; "desiring to look into these things," and breaking out afterwards when it is complete—ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands—in the song of their own deep, always suffering love, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Also in what Christ says himself, testifying—"Verily I say unto you there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Which joy he still further explains by showing how it springs up with his own, growing on the same root of care, concern and suffering sympathy; how they rejoice with him, because, with him, they are looking always after lost men, even as a shepherd after his one lost sheep, or a housekeeper looking after her one lost piece of money; and therefore, he and they together, when they have found their lost one, have their burden of sorrow, as he represents, fall off, in a blessed and rebounding joy.

Concerned fc sin as God is.

It is worthy, too, of special remark that Christ conceives them coming to men, in a ministry to the body strikingly correspondent with his own—restrained by no fastidious disgusts, averted by no disrespect of the humble and dejected lot of the poor. They do not spurn, they can not even neglect, the dying beggar at the rich man's gate. No matter whether it be a story of fact, or only

Concerned for the sick and poor as Christ was.

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a parable, the figure they make will be in character, in one as truly as in the other, and the picture he gives will, in either case, reveal them in a manner worthy of our study. The beggar is in a most sorry plight. He wants a nurse, a physician, and friends, and withal, a place in which to die. But of all his kinsmen, if he has any, there is none that will be charged with a care so unwelcome and loathsome. He goes a begging thus at the street corners and elsewhere, till finally having reached the shelter of a rich man's gateway, or the arched corridor of stone leading into the court of his house, his round is ended, and he lies down there, till the round of life also may be finished. He asks the pity of a few crumbs for his famishing body. Perhaps he gets them, and perhaps he does not. This at least he does not get; viz., that tender human sympathy which every humblest creature wants in his last hours.

Thus he fared with men; but there were two classes of beings, in a different key, who came to his help in their wonted acts of ministry—the dogs, I mean, and the angels—the dogs from below, esteeming him to be another and superior kind of creature; the angels from above, rating his significance and dignity as much higher, as their mind was capable of higher thoughts. Behold them here at hand, the dogs and the angels together, in a strange companionship of ministry, round the flinty bed of the poor abject and son of sorrow; they dispensing their low natural surgery on his ulcerated body, and these, beholding in him an heir of glory

and a future peer with them in their heavenly dignities; watching by him as volunteer nurses, strengthening him inwardly by the touch of their own brave hearts, and waiting, as the pulse beats low and the breath slackens to a full stop, to hail him as a brother made free, and convoy him home. Wonderful picture in the light and shade of it, signifying much, not only as regards the tender fidelity of their ministry to the bodily condition of men, but a great deal more as a revelation of the fact, that they are able to encounter so much nec essary revulsion of feeling and really painful sympathy, in doing their works of mercy. No one looking on the picture can fail to be struck by the very close analogy between their way and that of Christ himself. Neither they nor he can perform such works of sympathy on the loathsome subjects of bodily disease, without a great expenditure of suffering. The very pity that draws them to such works is itself a heavy load to bear, and is just as much heavier as their love is stronger, their sympathy closer, and their feeling more delicate.

See how it was with Christ, in that most tender, but strangely compounded and really fearful scene, the raising of Lazarus. Death, who took him on his way four days ago, is to be called back and required to let him forth alive. Jesus struggles, we can see, with great emotions, partly tender partly painful. He weeps, he groans in spirit, and is troubled. It is as if his feeling were in contact all through with death's foul work, as well as with the griefs of the friends—glad, for the disci-

ples' sakes, to the intent they may believe, and yet scarcely able to meet the ghastly appearing of the dead brother whom he will evoke by his call. Indeed, if we carefully study the pathology of this scene we shall see the feeling of Jesus struggling in it, with surges of painful commotion, scarcely less proper to be called suffering, than the agony itself.

So when the angels of God come to help the poor forlorn beggar off, in his release to life. That fastidious feeling which might torture us, in coming to a fellow mortal in such loathsome plight, they make nothing of; it will not trouble them, for they suffer no false disgusts. But that purity which has put them so far aloof from sin, and from all its foul incidents, their finer tastes, their more delicate, celestial sensibilities—all these are yet present to him, body and soul, not without pain, and lifting, as it were in sympathy with him, to bear him out of his foul cave and start him on his flight. So the beggar dies and is carried up, escorted home to Abraham's bosom, as the Saviour represents, by their angelic company. Christ bore him in his passion, and they, too, have borne him in their passion, now no longer a burden either on his feeling or on theirs. I will only add—

5. That the Scriptures speak of these angelic ministries, in terms that indicate an impression of sacrifice in them, and a vicarious engagement of their suffering love. The very word *minister*—"ministering spirits sent forth to minister"—has a Christly meaning, as if they were on a mission of service, and sacrifice, and holy pains-taking, like that

Conceived in the priestly character.

of Christ the Lamb; enduring contradiction, wounded feeling, heaviness of heart, and struggling on, through pains of love, to accomplish their charge of guardianship. They are also spoken of in terms that bear a priestly character as being intercessors for men. Such terms are figures, of course, and objective representations, even as they are when applied to Christ himself. Thus we find that, as Christ is called our Advocate with the Father, a priest that liveth ever to make intercession, so Christ testifies concerning these angels standing in their ministries—"they do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." To behold the face of God, in this manner, is to have a priestly access, and be able to maintain a priestly intercession, even as the high priest enters the holy of holies, to make answer and suit for the people. So when Christ declares—"there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," he means by "the presence of the angels of God," the presence of God made glorious by the priestly retinue of his angels, and these electrified with joy, that the labor of their heart is crowned, and their suit of reconciliation is triumphant.

The vicarious principle to be universal.

We have it then as a point established by Scripture evidence, that the glorified spirits, or angels of God, being in the love of God, are also in that kind of sacrifice, or vicarious engagement, which love, in its own nature, supposes. And so the gulf between sacrifice in uncreated and created minds is effectually bridged. Make as much as

we will, or possibly can, of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, and, as being the incarnate presence and ministry of God himself, too much can not be made of it, still there is no superlative, over-good kind of goodness in it. Calling it good by the only standard of goodness, perceiving distinctly that love, in any and every moral being, will burden itself for all sin and suffering, and hasten, by its own everlasting impulse, to take the woes of others on its feeling, we at once have Christ made intelligible and yet as sublimely preëminent, as the stature of his person, and the transcendent power of his divine ministry and suffering require him to be. What we call his merit will not be diminished, but it will be no such merit as exceeds the standards of character. It will not be a something which theology has found, to fill out a theologic and contrived exigency, but it will be a divine patience and sorrow, revealing God's love to our hearts; a grace, because it is the grace of a character; a salvation, because it is a power of salvation.

CHAPTER V.

ALL SOULS REDEEMED, TO BE IN VICARIOUS SACRIFICE.

In what is called his vicarious sacrifice, Christ, as we have seen, simply fulfills what belongs universally to love; doing neither more nor less than what the common standard of holiness and right requires. And then since there can be no other standard, and no perfect world or society can be constituted under a different, or lower kind of excellence, it follows incontestably that the restoration of mankind, as a fallen race, must restore them to a love that works vicariously, and conforms, in all respects, to the work and passion of Christ himself. Vicarious sacrifice then will not be a point where he is distinguished from his followers, but the very life to which he restores them, in restoring them to God. What we call his redemption of mankind must bring them to the common standard. Executed by vicarious sacrifice in himself, it must also be issued in vicarious sacrifice in them.

The common impression, I am sorry to believe, is different. It belongs, indeed, to the staple matter of our theologic teaching on this subject, that, while we are to follow Christ, and copy him, and aspire to be like him, we are never to presume, and can not without great irreverence imagine, that we

Vicarious sacrifice belongs to men.

are to have any part with him in his vicarious sacrifice. We can not atone, it is said, or offer any satisfaction for the sin of the world; we are too little, and low, and deep in sin ourselves, and nothing but a being infinitely great and perfect, by an optional suffering that exceeds all terms of obligation on himself, can avail to smooth God's indignations, and so far even our debt, as to make forgiveness possible. Therefore we are to understand, as a first principle of the Christian salvation, that Christ, in the matter of his vicarious sacrifice, is a being by himself and is not to be followed, in any sense, by us, though followed carefully in every thing else. In this very great mistake are included three or four subordinate mistakes, that required to be specially noted, and corrected by the necessary explanations.

1. That Christ, in all that pertains to his work as vicarious, acts officially, or fulfills an atoning office wholly one side of his character as a perfect character. He does not execute what belongs to the simple perfection of his love as a character fulfilling standard obligation, but performs a volunteer office in our behalf, over and above all that is obligatory on his own account. And so, the vicarious sacrifice, being a matter pertaining wholly to his office, and not to his character, we of course can have no part in it, because we have no part in his office, and can have as little in the official merit by which God's account is satisfied. Now the obvious fact, that which we have seen developed in the careful illustrations of the previous chapters, is that

Christ atones not by office, but by character.

vicarious sacrifice belongs to no office, or undertaking outside of holy character, but to holy character itself. Such is love that it must insert itself into the conditions, burden itself with the wants, and woes, and losses, and even wrongs, of others. It waits for no atoning office, or any other kind of office. It undertakes because it is love, not because a project is raised, or an office appointed. It goes into suffering and labor, and painful sympathy, because its own everlasting instinct runs that way. There can be no greater mistake, in this view, than to imagine that Christ has the matter of vicarious sacrifice wholly to himself, because he suffers officially, or as having undertaken it for his office to supply so much suffering. He suffered simply what was incidental to his love, and the works to which love prompted, just as any missionary suffers what belongs to the work of love he is in. It was vicarious suffering in no way peculiar to him, save in degree.

No further qualification is needed, unless it be to say, that effects will follow his vicarious sacrifice, that can not follow such kind of sacrifice in men. And the difference will be so great, that he will have accomplished all that can be fitly included in the redemption of the world, while the same kind of sacrifice, morally speaking, in men, will accomplish only some very inferior and partial benefits. A proportion stated between the incarnate Son of God and his infinitely perfect beauty on the one hand, and the very limited and sadly mixed virtue of a human person on the other, will represent as accurately as may

Sacrifice in us carries humbler effects.

be the comparative results of the same kind of sacrifice in both.

2. It is another of the mistakes referred to that, when vicarious sacrifice is restricted wholly to Christ, and considered wholly beyond the pale of human virtue, the restriction supposes a kind of vicarious intervention for sin that is artificial, and has no root in moral obligation. Either exceeding the law of love, or else falling short of it, he fulfills a kind of substitution that we can not share, because it is not in the range of our possible sentiment, or even intelligence. There is no *koinonia* for us, no "fellowship in his sufferings," because he suffers outside of all known terms of moral obligation. Whereas we may and must have fellowship, and be conformable even unto his death, because he is himself conformed in it to the one, universal, common standard of love. The true and simple account of his suffering is, that he had such a heart as would not suffer him to be turned away from us, and that he suffered for us even as love must willingly suffer for its enemy. The beauty and power of his sacrifice is, that he suffers morally and because of his simple excellence, and not to fill a contrived place in a scheme of legal justification. He scarcely minds how much he suffers, or how, if only he can do love's work. He does not propose to be over-good, and to suffer optionally a certain modicum beyond what perfect excellence requires, that it may go to men's account. He undertakes to furnish no superlative merit above all standard obligation, which, for just that reason,

The fellowship of his sufferings.

can have no perceived quality of merit. He is only just as good as he ought to be, and suffers what he ought to suffer, and has no thought of doing an artificial somewhat, in a scheme of artificial compensations, where he can be actuated by no assignable motive within the possible range of moral ideas. How far off do we place him, how poorly conceive him, when we put him thus away, and compel him to die for ends contrived, apart from all behests of character. All that is most central in his mission—the love of God in tears and deep groanings—is dried away and lost to feeling, in the sterile and dry figment we require it to be, as a mere quantitative sufficiency of pain, contributed under no assignable principle, and having no moral quality whatever.

3. Another mistake that follows, when vicarious sacrifice is restricted to Christ alone, is yet more lamentable because it corrupts the idea of sacrifice itself, when imposed as a condition of human discipleship. We insist, abundantly, on the necessary law of self-denial and self-sacrifice. We quote the Master's words requiring us to follow him and bear the cross with him, or after him. There must be sacrifice we say, every Christian comes into a life of sacrifice—only not into vicarious sacrifice; that belongs to Christ alone, suffering no participation of mortals. A qualification, or salvo, that very nearly unchristianizes Christianity itself. What is the sacrifice that must not be vicarious sacrifice, but a virtue that has even lost connection with Christian ideas? It is mere self-abnegation, a loss made for the simple sake of

The idea of Christian sacrifice how corrupted.

losing, and no such practical loss as love encounters, in gaining or serving an enemy. It has the same relation to vicarious sacrifice that penance has to repentance. It is itself a kind of penance, or torment, submitted to by the will. It does not appear to be even suspected that such kind of sacrifice is a mode of asceticism, substituted for the sacrifice of the Gospel, and yet it can be nothing else, for the simple reason that it is required not to be vicarious. Sacrifice out of love, or because a full heart naturally and freely takes on itself the burdens and woes of others, has a positive character, and is itself the most intensely positive exercise that can be conceived. The other kind of sacrifice, that which must not work vicariously, is naked self-suppression, a merely dry and negative operation, in which the soul willfully chokes itself and gets no return, but a sense of being famished for its pains. And how much of what is so persistently taught concerning self-denial, sacrifice, taking up the cross, is, in just this manner, a departure from all Christian ideas; a wearisome, unblessed, and forced virtue, that belongs to the false gospel of asceticism. Happily the evil is mitigated by the fact that, when we go into sacrifice and suffering for others, we break away from such asceticism, without knowing it, and come into the genuine, positive kind of sacrifice with Christ himself.

4. Still another and different kind of misconception is included in the denial of vicarious sacrifice to men, in the fact that it forbids us to think of reciprocating, in any sense, the sacrifice of Christ for us, and takes

away, in that manner, one of the dearest, most softening and soul-renewing exercises. What should the true love in us do so naturally, and with an instinct so free, as to take all Christ's feeling on its feeling; to suffer with him in his suffering of all kinds; to burden itself in all his burdens; to be afflicted in all the losses, apostasies, and dishonors that shame his saving work; because they wound so deeply his divine sensibility. As Christ became a suffering Saviour for our sake, so the love he begets in us will take every wrong done him as done to itself, and will gladly suffer also for his sake. Whether in fact we take it or not as a thing permitted us, to be entered into his burden as he into ours, we shall as certainly do it as we love him. Only it makes a very great difference whether we do it against some speculated doctrine of substitution that gives only him the right to act vicariously, or do it as the natural privilege and inborn right of our love. In one case, we do it feebly, or even cringingly, lest we venture too far and do some presumptuous thing; in the other we say "Let me do it, I must have it for my privilege. If Christ is afflicted for me, or in me, shall I not be afflicted for his affliction? If he is wounded by his friends, or his enemies, shall I not be wounded for his wounds? If he says, 'my yoke,' shall I not take that yoke upon me for his sake? Grant me this, O Saviour and Lord, to bear thy load with thee, as thou hast borne the load of my sins; to feel thy feeling, suffer in thy suffering; and, to crown all, as thou didst bear witness to the truth in

To be afflicted with Christ reciprocally.

thy death, let me not shrink from even dying to bear witness for thee." Just this feeling it is that has animated and armed the host of Christian martyrs in all the past ages. Called to die, as they believed, for Christ's sake, that has been enough. And how blessed and divine a thing is it always for the otherwise weak, distracted heart of a sinner, to come to the great world-containing heart of its Redeemer and have its opportunity in suffering with him! Nor is it any thing to object, that there is a genuine reality in his vicarious suffering, because, in taking our evils, he takes them off from us, while we, in taking his, remove no burden from him. Is he not as truly a sacrifice then for those who will die in their sins, as for those who take the saving benefit he brings? Besides, how does it appear that our bearing of his burdens with him takes off nothing from the weight of his burdens? When is any great benefactor more strengthened and comforted in his pains of sacrifice, than when some most dejected, weakest child of sorrow comes to bless him and asks to suffer with him? What again do we see, but that Christ himself, as in the scene of his agony, turns wistfully to his disciples, craving just this kind of sympathy and chiding them in wounded feeling that he has it not—"Tarry ye here and watch with me—could ye not watch with me one hour?" And as then he turned imploringly to his friends and besought them to watch with him, will it not be a cordial now to his often wounded compassions, when the little ones of the earth are for love's sake wounded with him?

In these specifications, or specified corrections, we have seen exactly what and how much is implied in the position, that we, as a race, in being restored to God, are to be perfected in the common, universal standard of goodness, and so to be established with Christ in the same way of sacrifice. We are thus prepared to open the Scriptures, and take their declarations in their true meaning. To them, accordingly, I now appeal; for it is a question resting on their simple authority, and no other.

I begin with the explicit declarations of Jesus himself. Thus, considering his own life as a ransom for sin, in the sacrifice to be made of it, he lays it on his disciples to follow him and be, if they may, the ransom purchase of others, saying—"even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Christ calls his followers to follow him.

Again, citing his own cross, when, as yet, nobody understands what it means, least of all that God's own love supports a cross of patience even from eternity, he says—"And he that taketh not up his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me." He does not mean by this that he is under a cross of abnegation, but only that he is going to be crucified for love's sake. For love's sake and work, therefore, they are to suffer with him, and bear a cross after him.

He calls us in the same way to bear his "yoke" and "learn of him" in doing it; for there is a way, as he will teach, to bear love's burdens joyfully. They shall not be dry penances or heavy-laden drudgeries, he tes-

tifies, but only such sacrifices of joy as love itself will assume for its objects—"the yoke, therefore, is easy and the burden light."

His death is to be the crowning fact of his sacrifice, as all agree, and yet, he does not claim any exclusive right to die in this manner, but even lays it down as the universal test of love and discipleship—"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he can not be my disciple." Obedience unto death is to be a law for them as truly as for him.

He contrives furthermore a scene, at the close of his ministry, where the great main truth is to be acted and so made visible—I refer to the scene of washing the disciples' feet—where his language, most carefully measured, and his action, most deliberately formal, quite exceed the supposition of many, that he is only teaching, in this way, the single grace of humility. Neither, at this solemn, almost parting hour, can it be imagined, that he is laboring any such limited and subordinate matter. Rather is he condensing all the matter of his humiliated suffering life of sacrifice, into a single scene, or picture, or parabolic action, that he may impress it in a total application on his disciples. And so he says at the end—"Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you." In one word, for that is what he means, "as I

have stood back from no sacrifice, or shame, for you, at the low point of your sin, so are you to seek and serve, all pride apart, the perishing brothers of your race."

Again, if we imagine something official in his mission of sacrifice, we find him consecrating his disciples, in his last prayer, to the same mission and in fact the same office—"As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through [literally *in* or *upon*] the truth." However true the doctrine for which this is commonly cited as a proof text, nothing could be farther from any thought of his on the present occasion, than to be discoursing on the truth as a means of sanctification. He obviously means to say—"And for their sakes I consecrate myself as an offering, that they also may be consecrated and offered, in like manner, in the service, or upon the dying testimony, of the truth. So he says, "for their sakes," as if he had come into his sacrifice, in part, that he may put them in the same—so to send them into the world, even as he was sent into the world.

Now the impressive matter, in all these citations, which might be indefinitely extended, is that Christ expects his followers to be with him at the very point of his sacrifice; just where it is even commonly assumed that we can, of course, have no part with him, and where it would even be a kind of insufferable presumption for a mortal to think of it.

We pass now to a different and more interiorly related class of citations; in which it will be seen, that the whole

economy itself of Christian virtue is based in the principle, and flavored by the spirit of vicarious sacrifice.

Sacrifice the economic law of discipleship.

Thus it will be noted in the very first discourse of Jesus, his sermon on the mount, that he can not even get through the beatitudes, and scarcely into them, without opening to view, and turning round for inspection, this grand first principle of devotement and unselfish love. Blessed are the poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, the merciful—these to him are the candidates for beatitude; and we see, from his subdued and tender manner, that he is thinking of his own sacrifice and beatitude. And thus it is that he goes directly on, to tell his friends how they will be reviled and persecuted by those whom they serve, and for his sake, adding—"Blessed are ye. Resist not evil. Smitten upon the right cheek turn the left. Robbed of your coat give up your cloak. Love your enemies, bless them which curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that (this is the argument, and how high does it reach) ye may be the children of your Father in heaven. Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." There has been much debate over this language. It means simply this; that we are to have one standard even with God, and that, a law of sacrifice and suffering patience—the same which Christ himself fulfills.

What the feeling of Christ is respecting the participation of his sacrifice by his followers, comes out even more strikingly, on a certain occasion, from the fact that

he is drawn away to it, by his associations, without apparently any previous intention. He is led to speak of his death, and of the general principle that the good must die, in order to be fruitful—"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." And then, as if drawn along to think by degrees of others, and finally of none but others, he adds—"He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me let him follow me." How close the relation between him and his disciples, when he calls them, in this manner, into his very death itself, and commands them to be with him, in all the sublime economy of sacrifice by which he is reconciling the world.

The apostles follow their Master.

His apostles, accordingly, follow after, teaching, all, the same great law of sacrifice, and presenting a gospel packed with symbols of sacrifice in every part. This word sacrifice they apply to men as freely as to Christ himself; Paul exhorting, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." "Let no man seek his own." "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;" Peter, when he writes, "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently, but if, when ye do well, ye

take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps." "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings." "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf;" John, also, when he writes, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

In these and other like passages which might be cited, from Christ and his three apostles, it is very commonly not discovered, I admit, that any such thing as a vicarious element is included in the Christian virtue. Every such conception is excluded by the reverently meant, but most injuriously false and really irreverent assumption, that nothing vicarious, whether in spirit or mode of life, is possible to a merely human being. Christ takes this whole field, it is believed, to himself, let no sinning mortal intrude! And yet, when this vicarious meaning or element is excluded from the passages referred to, they become passages of mock sentiment only; words that have a sound, but no deep, earnest meaning. Their real and truly magnificent import is, that it lies in the very scheme and economy of the gospel, to regenerate a Christly virtue in men, a character that bears the type of Gethsemane and the cross.

Mock sentiment.

Again we discover a closer, in some respects even

more convincing kind of evidence, in the testimony given by one of Christ's disciples out of his own human consciousness; I speak of the apostle Paul. The same is discoverable in others, only in a manner less striking. In later times, for example in George Fox, the Christly consciousness is revealed in a manner almost equally sublime. Now Paul is but a man, and yet he is a man so Christed, or possessed by Christ, that the very sacrifice of Christ is consciously and even visibly in him. As regards mental suffering, it is not to be supposed, of course, that Paul had any sensibility capable of as intense feeling; or any love to mankind capable of being as heavily burdened, as Christ is seen to be in what is called his agony; but in respect of mere physical suffering, I see no reason to judge that Christ made a heavier sacrifice, in his three years' ministry and death, than his servant did, in his long, laborious, always imperiled, persecuted life and martyrdom. So deep was he in the spirit of his Master, so heartily entered with him into the burdens of love. He can not even hide it from himself that he is in his Master's sacrifice—"Always bearing about," he says, "in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we, which live, are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." He dares even to conceive that his suffering life is somehow complementary to that of his Master—"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind

The Pauline consciousness.

of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church. Under the heading—"as workers together with him,"* he goes on to catalogue, in almost a whole chapter, these Christly losses, works, and pains, that he is bearing with Christ and for his sake. Nor is it mere bodily hardship and peril that he undergoes; we find him, at times and according to his measure, in a kind of mental Gethsemane, for the burden of love, and care, and grief for others, which has come upon him; as when he writes—"I have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh." There has been much debate over these words; but a soul that is really under Christ's yoke, and bearing his burdens, will be deep enough in the struggle of vicarious sacrifice, to know what they mean. Furthermore, it is remarkable, that Paul has reached no such point of theologic scruple, that he can not freely apply to his own life just the same sacrificial terms that he applies to Christ himself—"I am now ready to be offered." "Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all." He goes still farther, exhorting all Christians to be offered willingly in sacrifice like their Master—"And walk in love, as Christ, also hath loved us, and given himself for an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor."

This now is the true Christian consciousness, in all of the best and noblest human examples. The gospel of

* 2 Cor. vi.

life takes hold of a man all selfish, a fiery and proud persecutor, and it so changes all his inward aims and feelings, that he lives no more for himself, but for others; encountering perils, pains, privations, indignities, for his whole life long on their account; so burdened for them in feeling, at times, that he could even find relief in the imprecation that he might be accursed from Christ for their sake. So clearly is the Christian believer entered himself, as a matter of fact, into the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus. This is the new character it undertakes to beget in him, and the exact amount he has of Christian evidence is graduated by the amount of this new character found in his life.

I have given this large review of the Scripture citations on this subject, that it may be seen how freely, variously, constantly, they consent in the testimony, that Christianity begets, and, is to beget, in human character, the same kind of sacrifice that is found, or revealed in Christ. I have selected only a few of the passages that persist most undivertibly in this kind of testimony. It is not then by any speculation, or undue pressure on words, that I gain this conclusion. Nothing but a theologic pressure, kept up for ages, has availed to empty the Scripture of a truth that is so plainly taught, under so great a multitude of forms, and is set even in the foreground of the Christian plan.

Arresting my argument here, I still can not close the chapter, without calling my reader's attention to the immense loss Christianity has suffered, and is now suf-

fering, in losing out the faith that Christ is to be really followed by his followers. There is little importance in these discussions, if they do not help the gospel to assert its true idea, and exert that practical power it has undertaken to exert on the world. And whatever hinders or weakens that power, even though it take the name of Christian doctrine and is fairly meant as such, is about the greatest wrong that can be committed against both Christ and mankind. What then shall we think of any theologic doctrine or dictum, that makes a blank space at the very heart of the gospel, or which raises fences of obstruction, to keep men off from just that common standard of the heavenly virtue, in which all perfect minds are to meet; which breaks down the fact of community between Christ and his disciples; which says, this kind is for Christ, another for mankind; which gives him love in its genuine power, and gives them love in a sense so qualified, that all his most living and life-giving sacrifices would be stifled under it. The supreme art of the devil never invented a greater mischief to be done, or a theft more nearly amounting to the stealing of the cross itself, than the filching away thus, from the followers of Christ, the conviction that they are thoroughly to partake the sacrifice of their master. Such words I know sound harshly, but they are not harshly meant. I raise no accusation in them; for I do not, for a moment, imagine that perversity, or art, or any malign purpose has ever been concerned in the mischief referred to. I only use strong language to

The immense damage suffered here.

express my own strong convictions; taking this very deplorable matter simply as an example of the immense, and fearfully desolating wrong that may be done to God's truth and the world, by the well meant, but misguided, speculations and schemings of men, whose theories unwittingly reduce the gospel to their own measures. Having found a necessity that God's justice should be satisfied by some given quantum of suffering, and that Christ, in his death, made the contribution for us of that suffering, and that in this fact is contained all that belongs to his vicarious sacrifice, what should they infer but that we, in following Christ, are excluded, of course, from any such kind of sacrifice? All which is done with the better feeling of reverence, that it puts the Saviour in a figure of merit so superlative!

Effects of the hiatus between us and Christ.

The effect that follows is such as only can. It is as if the gift of the incarnation had been half taken back again. A wide hiatus still yawns between even the ideal of our virtue, and that of our Christ. Nor is it any thing to say, that whatever he does vicariously belongs to his office, and that we have no such office. It belongs, we have already seen, not to his office, but to his character; that is to his love, which is the spring of his character; the same, which is the root of all goodness in all good beings, drawing them as good to such as are evil, and putting them in a way of tender self-identification, that virtually assumes and bears the bad and shameful lot it compassionates. Without this vicarious property, love is not love. Pity there may be, philanthropic benevo-

lence, esteem, approbation, admiration, but the vital distinction of love is wanting. It is very true that we are not to set ourselves up as Redeemers of the world. Our petty measures of quantity and character forbid such a thought; just as any feeble and low man would be only absurd, in attempting what is given to some most qualified and strongest man of his own species. Still any such feeble and low man is to be, and may truly be, in the same kind of love with one who is most qualified and strongest. Nay, if this latter has been suffering and painfully watching for him, it will even be a chief point of his benefit and the raising of his life, that he so loves the person of his benefactor as to suffer his suffering. And just so it is that Christ, in his suffering love—always a fact, and only a fact revealed in his agony and passion—gets never the just degree of power in our feeling, till we are able to love his love and suffer with him in his suffering. Here only it is that he touches us at the quick, and becomes the soul renewing power of God. Vicarious love in him answered by vicarious love in us, tiny and weak though it be, as an insect life fluttering responsively to the sun—this is the only footing of grace, in which Christ is truly received, and according to his glorious power. Hence, in no small degree, the amazing dullness of the gospel to men's feeling, and even in men's feeling after they seem to have believed—we wonder often how it is ourselves. It is because there is no common footing between them and their Lord; because, in his superlative merit and suffering, he takes a different plane, from which they are

excluded. They are shut away, thus, from exactly what is most vital and most quickening in his passion. The cord of sympathy is cut, at just the point where it was to have the closest tension, and be most stringently effective.

Doubtless it will be said, in reply, that such kind of criticism is unjust. While it is very true that we exclude ourselves from any part with Christ in what is vicarious, do we not always insist that men are to follow Christ, to bear the cross, to deny themselves, to suffer wrong, to love and bless even their enemies? Undoubtedly, but how blurred, how sadly miscolored are all such teachings, when the huge exception we speak of is added. They are now to follow Christ in just that limited kind of sacrifice which he knew nothing of. They are to bear the cross for the discipline, and not for what love sees to be won by a cross. They are to deny themselves because it is good to put themselves under negation, or self-suppression—even as the monasteries kill out selfishness by the wearisome and dry torment of ascetic practices—not to deny themselves in love's own suffering, but joyful and free, ministry. They are to suffer wrong even as Christ did, only they are to do it in no such feeling as he did, when he bore the lot of transgression. They are to love and bless enemies, because it will school them in patience and humility, not as Christ bore enemies out of pure devotement to them; or they are to exercise themselves in acts of benevolence towards enemies, towards the impenitent, towards the heathen, in the name of love,

when confessedly they are excluded from any such tender identification with their bad lot as Christ, for love's sake, took upon him when he bore their sins.

And so it results that our discipleship, so called, is a discipleship fallen half way out of Christianity, even as our theology of the cross becomes a dry, stunted, half conception of it; reducing Christ to a mere book-account factor of compensation by suffering, and making nothing of him as the revelation of vicarious sacrifice in God; that which is the supreme fact and glory of his incarnate mission. Did we see this glory upon him, did we look upon him as sent into the world to beget us in the same character, and enter us into the same kind of life, how different our conceptions of his doctrine, how different the whole manner and power of our discipleship. The scheme, and scale, and meaning, of the gospel, as a grace related to our feeling and life, is no more the same. And the world, having such a grace installed in it, would begin, how soon, to glow, and burn, and tingle with new life in every part.

PART II.

THE LIFE AND SACRIFICE OF CHRIST IN WHAT HE DOES TO BECOME A RENOVATING AND SAVING POWER.

CHAPTER I.

USES AND RELATIONS OF THE HEALING MINISTRY.

ALL the perplexed questions growing out of substitutions, imputations, legal satisfactions, and penal equivalents, have thus far been avoided. There has been no delving in our exposition, but we have been moving easily rather, along open ranges of thought, where nothing too abstruse, or difficult to serve a merely practical interest, has come in our way. In this manner, we have gone over a considerable tract of our field, meeting scarcely a point of debate, in the subject as commonly handled. We have discovered a meaning, not difficult, for the vicarious sacrifice, and for all the Scripture phraseology relating to the same. We have seen it to be grounded in principles of universal obligation, acknowledged, or to be acknowledged, by all good minds, uncreated and created, in all worlds and ages of time.

Having reached this point, we now pass to another general department of the subject; where, continuing still in this rather untrodden, some will think, too easy level of movement, we undertake to settle a true conception of what Christ is doing in his sacrifice; viz., the end he will accomplish, the power by which he will accomplish it, and the course

Second stage of the argument.

of life and benefaction by which he will obtain that power.

When this also is done, as I think it may be with the same facility and avoidance of perplexed questions, we may well enough comfort ourselves in the conclusion, that, if by and by, or from that point onward, we are obliged to go to sea in questions more perplexed and laborious, we have a considerable continent already gained behind us, where we shall have large enough room, and ranges wide enough in the truth, to afford a worthy, or even sufficient gospel by itself.

Christ not here to die, but dies because he is here.

According to a current conception, Christ came into the world for the very purpose of the sacrifice, and not for ends beyond, in which the stress of his mission lay. The problem being to contribute so much of pain, or judicial suffering, as may be needed to square the account of sin, the conclusion naturally follows, when that view is taken, that he is here for the very purpose of the bleeding; that is to be substituted in our place, and take, or somehow compensate for, the release of our punishment. This, and not any thing different, is the coarsely conceived, legally quantitative vicariousness ascribed to him. We, on the other hand, regard the vicariousness in which he comes, only as the mode, or instinct of his love, when doing a work in the recovery and reconciliation of men. He was in vicarious sacrifice before he came into the world, having the world upon his feeling as truly as now, and only made the fact-form sacrifice, because he had the burden of it on him already. The

sacrifice, taken as a fact in time, was not set before him as the end, or object of his ministry—that would make it a mere pageant of suffering, without rational dignity, or character—but, when it came, it was simply the bad fortune such a work, prosecuted with such devotion, must encounter on its way. The missionary, going out to spend his days among a heathen people, does not go to make so much of sacrifice, including even that perhaps of life itself—that being his purpose he might better stay at home—but he makes the sacrifice when the fit hour comes, because he is in a work, and because the work requires it of him. Christ, then, we must believe, is here to do something—some great and mighty work—not to make up a necessary quantum of pain, for the compensation of God's justice. The sacrifice he makes, in becoming a man of sorrows, and dying a malefactor's death, will be suffered under his work, and only for his work's sake. He was not ignorant, of course, that he would suffer. He expected that, dying for his work would give eloquence and power to his mission; just because, not coming here to die, he would have it put upon him as the cost of his fidelity. Even as Anselm carefully and rightly distinguishes, when he says—"he suffered death of his own accord, not as an act of obedience, but on account of his obedience in maintaining right; for he held out so persistently, that he met death on account of it."*

What then is the end or object he is here to accomplish? By the supposition he is not here to square up

* Cur Deus Homo—Lib. i. Cap. ix.

the account of our sin, or to satisfy the divine justice for us. Neither is it any principal thing that he is here to prepare a possibility of forgiveness for sin. That is, if any thing, a secondary and subordinate matter, as will be discovered hereafter, in the Third Part of my argument. The true end, or object, of the sacrifice we shall find is very simple, though presented in the New Testament under manifold varieties of statement; for, widely different as the varieties are, they are all in radical agreement with each other. Taking our clue from one of the simplest and tenderest in beauty of them all—"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost;" or from one that is widest in range and contains the highest summation of all—"To wit that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself;" or from one most formally put, and, in a certain intellectual sense, the deepest of all—"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth"—taking hold of these and all such varieties of Scripture, we conceive a transaction moving on character in souls; a regenerative, saving, truth-subjecting, all-restoring, inward change of the life—in one word the establishing of the kingdom of God, or of heaven, among men, and the gathering finally of a new-born world into it.

What he undertakes to accomplish.

But the farther unfolding of this central idea we shall find requires us, for convenience sake, to make a fourfold distribution of the field or subject matter. First, we shall naturally give attention directly to Christ's

Healing Ministry, and the large indication there made of what he is doing and to do, in his sacrifice elsewhere. Then we shall endeavor to show more exactly in another chapter, what work he undertakes or proposes to do in souls, by his sacrifice. In another and third chapter it will be shown that, for that work's sake, he undertakes to be, and in the New Testament writings is conceived as being, the Great Moral Power of God, for its accomplishment. And then, fourthly, a chapter will be added to show how he becomes that power.

No accident that Christ is occupied with healings.

It is by no accident that Christ, not trained as a physician, and, as far as we can discover, never before exercised in matters of concern for the sick, opens out the grand public ministry of his Messiahship directly into an office of healing, turning the main stress of it, we may almost say, down upon the healing of bodies, from that time onward. Hence it is the more remarkable, that, when so much is made, in the formulas, of his threefold function under the the titles of Prophet, Priest, and King, he still makes no figure in them at all as a Physician or Healer. This latter he is in the literal fact of history, and a great part of his outward life is in this particular kind of engagement. The others he is, or is only to be, in some tropical, accommodated sense, where language helps its poverty by a figure more or less determinate. We discover, meantime, that while he does not disown, or repel these figures, permitting himself to be called a prophet, accepted as a priest, and exalted as

a king, or Messiah, in his Kingdom, he does not conceive that he is specially distinguished in his lifetime, at least, in these characters; but assumes that he is to be known as the expected man of prophecy, even from the first, by the works of his Healing Ministry. Thus when John sends messengers to inquire—"Art thou he that should come or look we for another?" he sends back word in the affirmative, saying—"Yes I am the expected Healer." "Go tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached." The plain inference is that however much, or little, may be meant by the three particular figures above named, he is, at any rate, in literal and solid fact of history, a healer—the Great expected Healer of mankind.

I do not call him the Physician, but the Healer, it may be observed; not because we need scruple to apply that name, but simply to call attention to the fact that the older designation, Healer, is the one always applied to him in the New Testament, and has, in strict construction, a quite different meaning. There appears to be a deep seated, original conviction among men, that diseases are from God, or the gods—tokens of displeasure on account of sin. The bad consciousness of sin volunteers this appalling construction of them, and the sufferer hopes to recover, only by some mitigation of the powers he has offended. Hence the need of a Healer; one who shall have skill, or faith, or some kind of access to

Disease goes with sin, Healing with salvation.

the retributive causes punishing the body, with power to abate their action, and accomplish the release of their victim. Thus also we find that, in almost all the savage races of the world, even now, the Healer is their Holy man, or Prophet, though in fact their conjurer only, or magician. The Physician, on the other hand, is one who deals in physic, one who cures the disorder of nature, by natural ingredients, working by their natural power. He and his work, and his means, are all in the plane of nature, (*Phusis*) and hence, from the days of Hippocrates downward, and perhaps in Egypt before that time, he is called a Physician. In that sense Christ was never a proper physician, for his cures were not wrought by prescription, but by the immediate extension, somehow, to the patient, of a divine, or supernatural power. He fulfilled, in this view, as probably it was never done before, the true idea of the Healer. The healing processes before resorted to had been of a mixed nature, more or less corrupted by superstition; operated, here and there by prescriptions obtained through oracles, or by application to prophets; sometimes seconded by appeal to God, in prayers and sacrifices offered by the priest. In the case of poison from the bite of serpents, incantations were specially resorted to. Diviners and magicians were often called in. If there was a pool, supposed to be stirred up, at certain hours, by an angel, the waters would be thought to have a special virtue. Now, at last, the Healer has come who can heal, and the true religious idea of the office is fulfilled in his person.

Why now this very remarkable devotion to the healing of bodies? Coming into the world, as we all agree, for ends so intensely spiritual—to be a deliverer of souls, and to become the Head of a universal kingdom gathered in his own glorious likeness and beatitude—why does he strike directly into this low level of labor, and concern himself in this large degree, with the diseases and disabilities of men's bodies?

His object in the healing of bodies.

It is a very common answer made to this question, that he does it from a wise consideration of the advantage he will gain by it, in men's prejudices, or the power he will thus obtain over them, in the separate matter of their spiritual choices and affections. On the same principle, we, it will be urged, are to go directly down into the economic struggles and physical pains of men, ministering to their needs and the terrible woes of their vices, taking them, in that manner, at a wise advantage, and not shoving them away from us, by endeavoring to bolt in spiritual lessons upon them, without any care for their bodily wants and ailments.

There can be no doubt of this as far as we are concerned, in our own human charities. Neither is there any room to doubt, that Christ's whole ministry and life change look, because of his healings, and the very systematic and tender care he has of men's bodies. Omitting these, or conceiving these very practical mercies never to have been shown, his teachings would be only lectures, and the whole work of his ministry, comparatively speaking, flashy and thin. Every thing

now is in a robust and rounded figure, just because these practical works in bodies keep away the look of theory and Targum, giving us a Saviour to worship and not a Rabbi to hear.

His incarnation connects him with the fortunes of bodies.

But that Christ really put himself to his works of healing for this purpose, we shall not be satisfied, after all, to believe. He has too much heart in these works, to permit a thought that he is in them prudentially, or to gain some ulterior and remote advantage. No, there is a deeper reason. He is here as the incarnate Lord of the worlds, and he could not even be thought in that character, if, being flesh, he did not turn himself to all he meets in the flesh. And so much is there in this, that any one having deep enough insight to read such a matter beforehand, would say that if the Word is to be incarnate, then he will assuredly appear to bodies, minister to bodies, claim the kindship of bodies, by a tender sympathy for their pains and a healing touch upon their diseases. Being, in this manner, Son of Man, he is brought close to man, upon his human level. He has come to be with him in that level—touched with the feeling, not of his mental, or more respectable infirmities, but of those which are lowest and most loathsome. What could a fastidious Saviour do here? one who is too delicate and spiritual, to concern himself with the disagreeable and often revolting conditions of bodies?

Besides, he is here in God's own love, and what shall that love grapple with, when it comes, but precisely that which is deepest in the consciousness of suffering?

No matter if he has come to be a Redeemer of souls. Souls and bodies are not so far apart as many try to believe. Where are the pains of bodies felt but in their souls? and where go the disorder and breakage of souls but directly into their bodies? How sovereign is the action of souls! how inevitable the reaction of bodies! And how nearly common are the fortunes of both! The fall of sin carries down body and soul together, and the quickening of the Spirit quickens, not the soul only, but the mortal body with it. We sometimes think the body is in health, when the soul is not; and the soul in health, when the body is not; but a great many diseases work latently, a long time, before they break out, and the returning of health is often working latently, a long time, before we discover it. After all, how nearly divine a thing is health, be it in the soul, or in the body; and as the fibres of both are intertwined, with such marvelous cunning, all through, how shall either fall out of God's order alone, or come back into it alone?

Souls and bodies not far apart in their fall.

The whole man quivers in the shock of sin. The crystalline order of soul and body is shivered by the same blow. Diseases consequent are nothing, after that, but the fact, that the harmonic condition of health is broken—nothing fitly joined together, nothing compacted by what every joint supplieth, nothing vitalized by the effectual and measurely working of all parts for each other. Why then should the Great Healer think to pass by bodies, when he comes for the healing of

souls? And as all men know it, when their bodies are sick, and are ready enough to be healed—ignorant meantime altogether of the disorder in their souls, and wanting no help there—why should not the Healing Mercy apply itself, at once, where it is wanted, and not throw itself away on souls, in the attempting of a benefaction sure, at first, to be repelled?

Furthermore, if we are to understand this matter, we must carefully observe what opinion Christ himself had of men's diseases and the bad implications whence they come. How large a part of his cures are wrought on persons whom foul spirits—just now unwontedly "tormented" and stirred up to a special activity—have taken possession of. How often does he say, "go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee;" though perhaps nothing has been said of their sins before, and possibly nothing more is meant than that they are cured of their malady. To the simply inoffensive, broken invalid, whom he found at the pool of Siloam and healed, he says—"Sin no more lest a worse thing befall thee." Over a poor disabled woman doubled by disease, he says, in softest pity, "whom Satan has bound these eighteen years." In this manner he associates disease, even habitually, with malign causes, and very nearly identifies the burden of it with the curse and burden of sin itself. Over the young man, blind from his birth, he does indeed say that "neither he nor his parents have sinned, that he was born blind," but he only means in this to repel the odious and half-superstitious impeachment, that was

Discovers in diseases the virus of sin.

charging the very special suffering of the case, to some special criminality in the house. Had the impeachment been, that all the disabilities, and diseases, and the generally disordered health of men's bodies are due to the great public fact of sin, and the retributive causes loosened by it, his profoundly accordant conviction is proved by his mission itself. Accordingly all his healings in bodies, were but so many types of the healing virtue he was dispensing, in the higher nature itself. Indeed the whole purpose of his life, comprehensively taken, was, in his own view, to work a healing general of the subject, a restoration thus to complete health and the crystal unity of heaven's vital order. Sometimes he appears to have operated for the soul, through the body; and sometimes for the body through the soul, contriving in what manner to elicit faith before the cure and assuming, evidently, the fact of a reciprocal action and reaction, operating naturally between them—the healing of the body helped by the faith of the soul and the faith of the soul by the healing of the body. In the large view, his operation is but one, and life, complete life, is or is to be the result.

His healings incompatible with penal substitution.

If now any one should ask what is the particular import, or importance, of this healing work of Christ in bodies, that it should even occupy a chapter in the doctrine of his sacrifice, the very simple and sufficient answer is, that it is a matter quite decisive, in respect to the nature of that substitutive office, which Christ undertook to fulfill. If we want to know in what sense, or manner,

he suffered for the sins of mankind, his immense expenditure of toil, and feeling, and disgustful sympathy, and the murderous jealousy to be encountered in healing the diseases of mankind, will furnish the exact explanation required. Indeed, if he came simply to be the manifested love of God, and to be lifted up as the brazen serpent in the wilderness, for the healing of guilty souls, nothing could be more natural, in that love, having that sublime healing purpose in view, than that he should go directly into the healing of bodies, in the manner described by the evangelists. But if he came to satisfy God's justice, or pacify God's wrath against sin, so to prepare a ground of forgiveness for sin, there is a very palpable two-fold incongruity between his healings and such a work. First, between offering mere pain, or suffering to God, and a general operation of body-cure on mankind, there is no more real agreement, or consent of meaning, than between doing the same and building a college, or endowing a school of surgery. And secondly, since all diseases are but issues of penal consequence, under the retributive laws God has incorporated in our human nature for the redress of our sin, what is Christ doing, in his mighty works of healing, but simply blocking, or defeating the ordinances of justice, whose wrath he has come to satisfy, and whose rule to propitiate? The disagreement is radical and total, between being man's substitute under God's penalties maintained, and being man's Healer under the same discontinued, or pushed by. The question how shall two walk together unless they

be agreed? was never more apposite. The inference indeed is absolute, one way or the other, either that Christ engaged in no such work of healing, or that he came to fulfill no such office of suffering.

Gloriously compatible with the healing of souls.

Meantime, the agreement between his healing ministry and the kind of vicarious action I have ascribed to him is complete. Nay, he could not come into the world, in that office, without undertaking one kind of ministry as naturally as the other; or, in fact, without feeling both to be one.

In this connection, therefore, that very important text which we have already cited comes back upon us, to magnify still farther its almost imperial authority—"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 'Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses.'" Here is a passage quoted directly from that stock-fund chapter of vicarious language, the 53d of Isaiah. The New Testament expression, "took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses," represents "hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," in that chapter; where immediately follow words like these—"Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

Now it will be seen that, in this passage, we have the stiffest looking terms of penal substitution any where to be found, and yet that we have also a clause at the

beginning, and a clause at the end, determining the *usus loquendi* of all these terms, and showing, beyond a question, that their meaning is exhausted by the labors, and suffering sympathies, and wrongs of bitter violence Christ endured, as the bodily and spiritual Healer of mankind For when it is said, "he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," it is no more possible to understand that he is literally substituted in our griefs and sorrows; for the language has been applied to Christ's healings, and is even declared to be fulfilled in the fact, that he there "took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." For he took them not literally upon him, but only assumed them to bear in a way of pains-taking labor, and exhaustive sympathy, and disgustful attention, coupled with much abuse and little gratitude. And then again, when he is said, in so many strong terms, to have been wounded and bruised for us, put in chastisement and stripes, how suddenly and even totally does the substitution change look, when the terminal aim, or end, or idea appears. The wounding and bruising, the chastisement and stripes, do not bring us out as we should expect, on the satisfaction of God's justice, but we read, instead—"with his stripes we are healed;" or, as in Peter's version—"by whose stripes ye were healed." And so, taking all Christ's ministry, from his beginning to the hour of his death, it turns out that he is in a grand work of healing for body and soul, charging on his burdened feeling all our sicknesses and pains, all the disorder of our transgressions and sins, weary, disgustful, deep in sorrow, cir-

cumvented, hated, persecuted and smitten, as it were, of God, yet persisting even unto death; and all this for our peace, or, what is nowise different, for our healing, or complete health. What a profound reality, and depth, and rationality, is there in such a vicariousness! Nobody is offended by it, and where is the heart it will not soften? Health, too, this divine health! typified by the cooling of so many fevers, the seeing of so many blind eyes, the leaping of so many crippled limbs, the leprous skin blushing into color, the weakness bounding into pulse, the tingling of new life where life was ebbing low, and, above all, the sense harmonically tuned to wind, and sky, and weather—take all this for sign, without, of that sublimer healing in the soul's disorders within, following it upward into the state of complete life, and purity, and harmony with God, how great a matter is it, and how fit to occupy the burdened heart, the crucified fidelity, and all the suffering years of the Son of God! Is there any substitution worthier to be borne by him, or more to be admired and glorified by us?

Practical value of these analogies.

In this general view, it is hardly possible to overmagnify the importance of Christ's healings, taken in their spiritual uses, and their connections with the preaching of his gospel afterwards. In them are provided the finest and most quickening analogies; so that every story of healing is, in fact, a sermon, yielding its own particular lesson of prayer and importunity, of holy conviction, of divine sympathy and strength-giving, of trust, of coöperative

action, of public confession and devoted following. When rightly handled, there is a wonderful felicity in such lessons. No logical processes, or refinements are wanted to set them forth. They make their address directly to the sentiments, and get themselves interpreted by the practical wants and troubles of experience. Sin, too, is so very like to disease and so closely yoked with it, that it takes to itself, with quick facility, whatever is said, or done, for disease. Talking of blindness the sinner scarcely counts it a figure to say that his soul is blind. The being held by demons gets, how often, a ready interpretation from the terrible storms of the mind, and the unsubduable fires of hate and demonized passion! How easily, too, will the soul that is shamed and utterly broken, by guilty and remorseful convictions, take every thing said and done for a poor leper, as being wonderfully true for it! The healings, in this view, belong to the very staple matter of the gospel. Without them, it would be a soul without a body; for a gospel wants a body, as truly as a man, or a seed; and, as every seed hath its own body, so the outward facts of Christ's healings are the very particular and proper body, of the mightier and diviner healings he has undertaken to work in character and the inner man of the spirit.

Besides, it is another very important office of these works on the body, that they emphasize the whole manner and working of Christ. We want, as sinners, a supernatural salvation if any, one that has power to turn back all the currents and causalities of retribu-

tive disorder in our sin. We are under sin, and a power is wanted that can draw us out and bring us clear of it. How much then does it signify that our Saviour was a Healer. Going along with him in his ministry, and seeing how he works; always competent to the thing he undertakes, unsealing eyes born blind, banishing foul spirits, commanding the white skin of lepers to redden into health, hearing every forlorn sufferer's prayer, unable to be even touched in the hem of his garment without sending out some healing virtue; we have the feeling produced that we, too, can be healed, that the grip of retribution fastened upon us by our sin, all the bad causalities of our inward disorder, can be loosened. In the salvation offered us, there is a look of capacity; we feel that God is in our case, able to undertake, and carry, and complete, the work of our deliverance—able to save unto the uttermost. In this profoundly necessary impression, the other miracles also concur; but if these mighty works had not been wrought, nothing else that Christ could have done, in the sphere of truth and the spirit, would have had the necessary energy of a gospel. Not even his cross would have signified much beyond the proof of his weakness. It is only when the GREAT HEALER dies, that we look to find his cross a deed of power.

Types and proofs of a supernatural salvation.

After what was said, in the next previous chapter, of the recovery of men to a participation with Christ in his sacrifice, it may occur to some one to ask, whether

it can be imagined, that his healings are to be thus participated? To which I answer that, in some very important degree, they probably are. And here I will say nothing of the "gift of healing," so-called, which many are quite positive is discontinued—showing still no Scripture for the fact; for if it were in still undisputed exercise, it would pertain only to such as are put in the gift, and not to the general condition of discipleship. We are looking here for that only in which the followers of their Master are to follow; that which belongs to their unity of spirit and object with him. Here we find them called to look on the things of others, even as he did, and to have the same mind with him in his condescension to the broken lot of mankind. And this includes, of course, a large, and full, and free sympathy with all suffering; a capacity of being burdened for the sick, and sometimes a necessary, knowing consent to exposure from contagious maladies, that involves the greatest peril to life. The ministry of love—no Christian can withhold himself from this, whether it relate to mind, or body, or sin, or sickness. Hence the expectation, apart from any gift of healing, that all disciples, in all grades and positions, will have their prayers burdened heavily, often, for the sick, and will sometimes prevail before God in suit for their recovery—this apart from any thought of miracle, and by virtue of the merely Christian efficacy of prayer, as affirmed by the doctrine of prayer itself.

Partaking in the sacrifice, shall we also in the healings?

Hence that remarkable passage in the close of the

epistle of James, affirming the efficacy of prayer for the sick, and by the interjection of some vicarious image, or term, in almost every verse, giving it the very cast of the Christly sacrifice. It opens by permitting every sick person to send for the elders of the church, and laying it on them, as a charge belonging to their office, to pray over the sick, and help their own faith in doing it, by the ancient solemnity of a ritual anointing. Then it passes on to what is more general, belonging, not to church officers, but to the common efficacy of prayer itself; where the declaration is, that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick;" that the Lord—not the disciple—will raise him up, and that his sins shall be forgiven him, as they were forgiven by Christ in his healings. It will not be understood, of course, that the prayer of faith is pledged to restore all sick, but only that it will restore as many sick as can have the prayer of faith given, or allowed; for God will not help any one to pray in faith for such as he will not restore. In the next verse, the subject is enlarged, and all Christian friends are put in a kind of vicarious relation to each other, in respect to their faults and maladies of soul. "Confess your faults one to another"—ask sympathy, that is, in a free statement of your inward troubles—"and pray for one another that ye may be healed;" as if the matter wanted were a cure of inbred disorder. Then follows an appeal to the example, or instance of Elijah's prayers; and the matter is put in a form to cut off forever the idea that such kind of prayer is, or ever can be, antiquated; for Elijah's prayers we are told were not spe-

cially a prophet's, or an angel's, but only a man's, and that "man subject to like passions as we are"—just as weak, and cloudy, and hard of faith as a proper human creature will be. Finally he goes on to speak of the care every brother will have for every brother, when he falls; how he will fly to the rescue, and turn him back, and be a Saviour to him, like his Master, only in a lower, less complete sense, proper to his own human weakness. Have it as a fact always in your feeling, he says, that "he which converteth a sinner [that is, a fallen brother] from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins." It is all along we shall perceive, in this passage, as if the Master were calling the disciple to have a close, dear part with him, in his healing and saving work. And, what is most of all impressive, he gives in that word "*hide*," a part with him, so to speak, in his very work of reconciliation. The Old Testament word translated atonement, reconciliation, literally means to hide, or cover—"Thou hast covered all their sin"—"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered." As the Master has this power, and stands in this high honor, so the follower shall follow, and shall even hope, when he pities the fall of his brother, and prays him back, with many tears and tender watchings thereunto, that he also may be the minister of healing and a justifying peace, and may hide a multitude of sins.

Speaking thus of prayer and of works by prayer accomplished, not to put down, in connection, the remark

able promise of Christ, so often debated, and so difficult, as many think, to be rationally qualified, might even be a criminal omission—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask, in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name I will do it." This huge over-promise of the Saviour —what shall we make of it? how, and how far, shall we qualify it?

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST'S OBJECT IS THE HEALING OF SOULS.

THE healings of Christ in bodies, we have just seen, are in fact an outward type of the more radical and sublime cure he undertakes, by his sacrifice, to work in fallen character. In this cure, we have the principal aim and object of his mission. We may sum up thus all that he taught, and did, and suffered, in the industry of his life and the pangs of his cross, and say that the one, comprehensive, all-inclusive aim, that draws him on, is the change he will operate in the spiritual habit and future well-being of souls. In this fact it is, and only in this, that he becomes a Redeemer. He is here in vicarious sacrifice, not for something else, but for this.

In the unfolding of this general conception, my present chapter will be occupied. It is very commonly assumed that Christ is here for another and different main object; viz., to suffer before God's justice, and prepare, in the satisfying of that, a way of possible forgiveness for men. From this I must dissent, though without proposing here any controversy, farther than may be implied in the maintenance and due illustration of my

proposition above stated. What was necessary to be done for the preparation of forgiveness will be considered, at a more advanced stage of the discussion I only say, for the present, that this is no principal matter in his work, the principal matter being to inaugurate a grand, restorative, new-creating movement on character—the reconciliation, that is, of men to God. The other, the preparation of forgiveness, take what view of it we may, unless we make forgiveness the same thing as reconciliation, can be only a secondary and subordinate matter, the principal work and wonder of all being what Christ undertakes and is able to do, in the bad mind's healing and recovery to God.

Christ is our Regenerator.

That some very great and wonderful change, or recasting of soul is, in some way, necessary—as well as to provide the forgiveness of sins—is generally admitted and asserted with abundant emphasis; but it is not as generally perceived that Christ has any particular agency in it. It is not denied that his teachings have great value, or that what is called his expiatory suffering for sin is effective in a degree, on men's feeling, as well as efficacious in the satisfaction of justice; and it is continually put to his credit, in this same suffering and satisfaction, that he has purchased the Holy Spirit, and sends him forth to work the needed change in souls. In this way, some compensation is made for the loss that accrues by a failure to conceive the immediate and really immense agency of Christ in such changes; still there is a loss. No conception of Christ really meets the true signifi-

cance of his mission, that does not find him working centrally in the great Soul-Healing himself; related presently to it, in all the matter of his suffering and sacrifice. It is not his simply to forgive, or obtain the forgiveness of sin, in the lowest and most nearly negative sense of remission; his great and vastly more significant endeavor is, to make the sin itself let go of the sinner, and so deliver him inwardly that he shall be clear of it. And to accomplish this requires an almost recomposition of the man; the removal of all his breakage, and disorder, and derangement, and the crystallization over again, if I may so speak, of all his shattered affinities, in God's own harmony and law. And, in order to this result, whatever agencies beside concur in it, three things, included in the sacrifice and suffering of Jesus, appear to be specially needed.

1. There is a want of something done, or shown, to preëngage the feeling, or raise a favoring prejudice in it; so that, when advance is made, on God's part, in a call to repentance, the subject may not be repelled, but drawn rather. Otherwise it is like to be as it was in the garden, when the culprit hearing God calling after him, fled and hid himself. No bad soul likes to meet the Holy one, but recoils painfully, shivers with dread, and turns away. But the foremost thing we see in Christ is not the infinite holiness, or sovereign purity; he takes us, first, on the side of our natural feeling; showing his compassions there, passing before us visaged in sorrow, groaning in

Pre-engages the feeling.

distressful concern for us, dying even the bitterest conceivable death, because the love he bears to us can not let go of us. In a word we see him entered so deeply into our lot, that we are softened and drawn by him, and even begin to want him entered more deeply, that we may feel him more constrainingly. In this way a great point is turned in our recovery. Our heart is engaged before it is broken. We like the Friend before we love the Saviour.

2. It is another point of consequence, in the matter of our recovery, that we have some better, more tender, and so more piercing, conviction of sin, than we get from our natural remorse, or even from the rugged and blunt sentence of law. It is well, indeed, to be shot through with fiery bolts from Sinai, but these hard, dry wounds, these lacerations of truth, want searching and wounding over again, by the gentle surgery of love, before we are in a way to be healed. In this more subduing, and more nearly irresistible convincing, we have, in part, the peculiar efficacy of the cross. We look on him whom we have pierced, and are pierced ourselves. Through the mighty bosom struggle of the agony and death, we look down, softened, into the bosom wars and woes Christ pities and dies for in us. And when we hear him say—"Of sin because ye believe not on me"—we are not chilled, or repelled, as by the icy baptism of fear and remorse, but we welcome the pain. As Simeon himself declared, "he is set for the fall," as well as "for the rising again;" and we even bless the fall that so tenderly prepares the rising.

Awakens the conscience.

In this manner it was, that the conversion of Paul began at the point of that piercing word—"I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." Penetrated and felled by that arrow of the divine love, his "exceedingly mad" feeling dies, and his resistance, from that moment, is gone.

3. There greatly needs to be, and therefore, in Christ, is given, a type of the new feeling and life to be restored. Abstract descriptions given of holiness or holy virtue, do not signify much to those who never knew them inwardly by their effects. To conceive a really divine character by specification, or receive it by inventory is, in fact, impossible. No language can give the specification, and no mind could take the meaning of it accurately, if it were given. Hence the necessity that we have some exposition that is practical and personal. We want no theologic definition of God's perfections; but we want a friend, whom we can feel as a man, and whom it will be sufficiently accurate for us to accept and love. Let him come so nigh, if possible, let him be so deeply inserted into our lot and our feeling, that we can bury ourselves in him and the fortunes of his burdened life, and then it will be wonderful, if having God's own type in his life, we do not catch the true impress from it in ourselves.

Stands for the exemplar.

In these three points, we perceive, that the suffering life and death of Jesus are the appropriate and even necessary equipment of his doing force, in what he under

takes for character. Observe now what this doing includes, and in how many ways and forms it is set forth. Thus he quickens—"and you hath he quickened." He gives life—"that he should give eternal life." He liberates the bondage of souls—"If the Son shall make you free." He new-creates—"new-created in Christ Jesus." He begets—"hath begotten us again to a lively hope." He raises from the state of spiritual death—"and hath raised us up together." He converts—"turning away every one of you from his iniquities." He is the captain, or bringer on, of salvation—"bringing many sons unto glory." He reconciles, or changes to conformity of life with God—"to wit that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." He redeems—"made unto us redemption." In the same way he is called "the light of the world," "the day-star," "the truth," "the water of life," "the bread of life," the mirror of God's glory, before which "we are changed from glory to glory." In short there is no end to the images that spring up, at every turn of the New Testament writings, to express the operative purpose and manner of Christ's soul-renewing work—presenting it continually as the something he is doing upon us, or to revolutionize and restore our character. This would be more impressively shown, if we could pause on all these various expressions, such as I have briefly cited by catch words, and unfold them by a deliberate exposition of their meaning.

The Scriptures make him a renewing power.

But instead of this, I will recall, in this manner, a

single expression, or figure, as directly referred to him as any of the others, and commonly overlooked as having any such reference at all—the figure I mean of birth, or regeneration. It is even commonly taught that Christ is not immediately concerned in the change called regeneration, but only in the preparation of forgiveness for it, when the change is wrought by the Holy Spirit, in the office that belongs to him. What then signify such examples as these? "But as many as received him [Christ] to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" [i. e. of God as in Christ.] Again—"Every one that doeth righteousness is born of him," [Christ.] And again—"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, [the Logos] that liveth and abideth forever."

This matter of regeneration is referred also to the Holy Spirit, it is true; but not in any such exclusive sense that it is not referred with equal truth to Christ; for it is even declared to be the office of the Spirit to glorify Christ in the soul. Christ is a power to the soul before its thought, and by that which is given to thought in his person. The Spirit is a power back of thought, opening thought as a receptivity towards him, and, in that manner, setting the subject under the impression of Christ's life, and death, and character. "He shall glorify me," says the Saviour, "for he shall receive of

None the less a Regenerator that the Spirit is also.

mine, and shall show it unto you." In Paul's view, conversion is to be described accordingly as the inward discovery of Christ. "When it pleased God," he says, "to reveal his Son in me," giving that as the account of his conversion. Christ then is, or is to be, an operative power on men, in the sense that they are to be regenerated in holiness by him. In a remoter and equally true sense, they are regenerated by the Spirit; in a closer and more proximate sense by Christ, as the moral image and love of God, set forth to engage their love and renew them in character. The work required is no such work as can be summarily struck out, by the mere efficiency, or force-principle of God. It requires all there is of God, in the incarnate life of Jesus, in his feeling, in his Gethsemane, in his death; a brooding of the whole deific mercy, and truth, and patience, and holiness, over the inthrallment and death-like chill of the soul. Even as Paul testifies again—"But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus *and* by the Spirit of our God.

Such is the kind of efficacy which the Scriptures attribute to Christ, and for this kind of efficacy in human character they conceive him to be sent into the world. And, by this kind of efficacy, too, we shall see that he is revealed in the consciousness of his disciples. It is not the account of their Christian experience, and of the gospel as related thereto, that Christ has done something before God's throne, and wholly apart from all effect in them, to make their acceptance possible; and then that the

The Christed consciousness in all disciples.

Holy Spirit, by a divine efficiency in them, changes their hearts. No such theologic gospel of dry wood and hay is the gospel of the apostles. They find every thing, in their human nature, penetrated by the sense, and savor, and beauty, and glory of Christ. Their whole consciousness is a Christ-consciousness—every thing good and strong in them is Christ within. Worsted in all their struggles of will-work and self-regeneration, they still chant their liberty in Christ and say—"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free." Their joy is to be consciously Christed, fully possessed by Christ; to have him dwell in them, and spread himself over and through all the senses and sentiments, and willings, and works of their life.

This is Paul, for example, a man transformed, all through, by Christ living in him; consciously weak and little and low in himself, and possible to be lifted only in the hope that, as Christ hath risen from the dead, he may also rise with him, to walk in newness of life. Not that he was captivated simply by his life. He was even more profoundly captivated by his death, and found, in fact, his deepest inspirations there; desiring ever to be with him in the fellowship of his sufferings, and to be made conformable to his mighty sacrifice in them. In that sacrifice it was that he most felt his working. That broke his heart, and there he took the saintly fire that burned so brightly in him. It is as if the Paul-soul were all wrapped in by the Christ-soul, and he only speaks aloud what he feels

within, when he says—"Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

It is also a singular confirmation of this kind of evidence, that all living disciples of our own time give the same kind of testimony from their experience, when, by their doctrine, they have no right to it. They have no such view, it may be, of Christ, as that he is sent to be a regenerative power on character; the lean kine of judicial satisfaction have devoured the good kine of God's regenerative bounty, and yet they cling to Christ for a wonderful and blessed something still, which he puts in their feeling, and call him lovingly their life. Sometimes they look after a reason why they are so much bound up in him, and imagine that it is their sense of gratitude to Christ for the squaring of their account with God, by his sufferings; as if they could have him in so great endearment for what he has suffered before God, apart from all that he is and pleads before us. No, this working grace of Jesus goes before all gratitude, to beget us in a spirit of gratitude, when we have none; it is not the satisfaction of our debt, but it is the noble sympathy in which he draws himself to us, the agony of his concern for us, the lifting up of his cross, in which he proves his faithfulness even unto death—by these it is that he installs himself in so tender a devotion, in all believers' hearts. Thus it is that he gets into their prayers, into their sense of liberty, into their good conscience, bathing them all

This same view is virtually accepted by those who deny it.

over in the glorious confidence and bliss of his consciously participated life. They sigh after him with Thomas à Kempis, rest in him with Brainard, sing him as the mighty power with Wesley, even though they know him in their doctrine, only as a sacrifice before God's justice.

Indeed it will be observed that all effective preachers of Christ under the penal satisfaction doctrine, quit their base in it instinctively, when they undertake the capture of the heart—falling, at once, into modes of appeal that make him God's Regenerative Argument. They show how he loves the world, and testify "the love of Christ constraineth us." They magnify the tenderness of his healing ministry. They picture the cross to human sensibility, as if they really believed that Christ was lifted up to draw men to himself. They can not sufficiently praise the beauty of his wonderful character. If they think of God's wrath that could be assuaged only by his blood, no present feeling of consistency forbids their seeing God's patience in him, and the sacrifice he will make for his enemies. So they preach him directly to men's hearts, in all the most winning, and subduing, and tenderest things they can say of him; as if he were really incarnated in the world for that kind of use. Meantime they call it preaching Christ, only when they preach the satisfaction, and complain, it may be with real sadness, that now-a-days, there is so little preaching of Christ; understanding in particular, that kind of preaching. When alas! the poorest, most repelling thing done is

precisely that; and so little of that is done, just because the poverty and repulsiveness of it are silently and irresistibly felt.

Reclamations of lost Scripture.

In general harmony with these appeals to fact and living evidence, it becomes a considerable and sad part of my duty, in this chapter, to reclaim the lost proof-texts, which have been carried over to the side of the satisfaction theory, and away from their very obvious natural meaning. I do not charge it as a fraud, that so much of Scripture has been stolen away from its rightful use and import—every mistaken theory or doctrine of religion, which obtains long use, gradually and unconsciously, or by fixed necessity, converts the Scripture symbols to itself and makes them its proselytes. Take for example the texts that follow.

"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world."* It is not said that he taketh away the punishments of the world, but "the sins"—just that which was signified by the sacrifices of the altar and the scapegoat sent away into the wilderness. The lamb was not punished, neither was the goat. The very thing signified was the removal, or deportation of the sin.

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten son into the world, that we might live through him."† "That we might live" gets to mean that we might have our penal

* John i. 29. † 1 John iv. 9.

liability released and nothing more. A previous verse in the epistle—"For the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us"—raises no barrier against a construction so frigid, even though it tells us expressly that Christ was incarnated to be the manifested Life, the same that was with the Father and is to beget, or be, eternal life in us.

"Who his own self bare our sins, in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed."* This passage is used very much as if the "bearing of the sins," and the "stripes" spoken of, were the whole matter; whereupon the judicial substitution theory has nothing to do but to assign its own construction and take the text into its own particular service. Meantime the very bearing of sins has its end, or aim, plainly declared and is itself to be qualified by its aim—it is that we may "live unto righteousness;" being, as we see, an appeal of suffering for us, to work a change inwardly in our life, and beget us anew in righteousness. And so of the "stripes;" they are not penal stripes, inflicted for God's satisfaction, but such kind of suffering as works a divine healing in us—"By whose stripes ye were healed."

"For Christ also hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God."† As if this suffering, the just for the unjust, must, of course,

* 1 Peter ii. 24. † 1 Peter iii. 18.

mean a suffering of penalty for the unjust, when it is even declared, as the object of the suffering ministry and mission—"that he might bring us unto God."

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world."* It is not from God's justice, not from any future wrath, that Christ will deliver, when he gives himself for our sins—no compensation to God's law is even thought of—but he gives himself to deliver us from a state of evil now present; from corrupt custom, the law of this world, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ."† Probably the expression "being made a curse for us," does imply that he somehow comes under the retributive consequences of our sin—in what manner will hereafter be explained—but that will not justify the conclusion that Christ's chief errand is to satisfy God's justice, and so to prepare the forgiveness of sin. Is not the object plainly declared, viz., "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles?" Is it then the blessing of Abraham, that God is satisfied in him, and forgiveness of sins obtained by him? or is it rather that the Gentiles might come as near to God as Abraham was, and be so wrought in as to be also friends of God with him?

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new

* Gal. i. 4. † Gal. iii. 13-14.

creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ."* How much do we hear of the reconciliation of God by Christ! and yet the very word is a word of transformation wholly inapplicable to God; and what is more, it is here even formally applied to us—"hath reconciled us." Besides the "all things" which are said to come of God, in this reconciliation, are precisely the new things before comprehended in the becoming "a new creature." It would seem to be even impossible to get these words into the use they have so commonly been made to serve. And then how much more, when it follows immediately as a whole description or summation of the gospel itself—"to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." It is one thing to reconcile the world, and a very different to reconcile God.

"That he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."† Here we have the priestly figure, and the "reconciliation" is a different word, derived from the atonement service of the altar; and it is a reconciliation not of man, but "for sins;" all which appears to favor, in a certain degee, the satisfaction theory which it is continually cited to support. And yet the object specified in the words that follow turns back, how

* 2 Cor. v. 17-18. † Heb. 2. 17-18.

plainly, all such constructions, showing, at the same time, how easy it is to miss the genuine import of this kind of figure, by taking it too closely and with too little range of liberty. For, in that he himself hath suffered, in his great trial and sacrifice, says our apostle, he has brought us succor in our trial, so that he, by that succor, is truly our priest, as he undertook to be, and becomes the soul-help in his sacrifice that takes away our sin. Every thing turns after all, in these high figures of the altar, and is meant to turn, on the nearness into which he is brought, and the dear sympathy proved by his sacrifice.

I will not go on to cite other texts that have shared the same hard fortune, but will only say, in general, that a numerous and very important class, which represent the lustral figures of the Old Testament, and speak of Christ in one way or another as having "washed," or "purged," or "cleansed," or "sprinkled," the soul, are systematically converted from that natural and easy signification, to denote a clearance before the law, now satisfied; when there is, in fact, no cleansing wrought in the defilement that was created by disobedience to it. Whereas it is the very purpose of these lustral transactions, or rites—that for which they were specially prepared of old—first, by a kind of implicit force, or power of religious association, to push the mind of a crude age forward into a cleanness it could not think; and then, afterwards, to be a symbol under Christ of that spiritual cleansing otherwise difficult to be expressed. Thus when the argument is, "For if the blood of bulls

and of goats and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God"* —what can be more plain than that the cleansing here spoken of is no mere change in the soul's legal possibilities, but a lustration of "the conscience" itself, and a turning of the soul inwardly, away from sin, to the service and obedience of God? So of all the like figures—they have no reference whatever to the matter of a judicial satisfaction, but simply to sanctification of character.

If now all these reclamations of Scripture were made, there would be very little left to give a complexion of authority to any other conclusion, than that Christ is here for what he can do in the restoration of character. To prove a negative so wide is difficult, and therefore only do I withhold from saying that nothing will be left. Still, if I am able to show, in the next chapter, that he is represented as having come, first of all, and above all things beside, to be a power on character, which power he became in the vicarious suffering of his life and death, it will amount, as nearly as possible, to the same thing.

* Heb. ix, 13, 14.

CHAPTER III.

HE IS TO BE GOD'S POWER IN WORKING SUCH RECOVERY.

In ordinary cases where a work is undertaken, it signifies nothing more to say that the doer undertakes to be a power to that effect; for whatever is to be done, by action, supposes, of course, a power acting. But where there is something to be done, not by action, but by quality of being, or by the worth, and beauty, and divine greatness of a character, the action is nothing and the power to be effective thus, in simply being what it is, every thing. Therefore, when we say, and show that Christ is here to new-create, or regenerate, fallen character, it is not insignificant to add that he is here to be, or become, so great a power. For the new creation we speak of is not a work to be carried by any kind of doing, or efficient activity, or even by the fiat-force of omnipotence itself, but only by such higher kind of potency, as can do so great a thing, through our consent, and without infringing our liberty; do it, that is, by the felt quality of being, or holy impulsion of worth and beauty it embodies. How far it may be the way of the Holy Spirit to operate in the regeneration of character by action, or the doing method, we do not know; doubtless God will

Two kinds of power.

do for us by the force-principle all that may be done by it; but the force-principle is not related plainly to the doing of all which requires to be done in the matter of so great a change, unless it be in ways circuitous, and one remove distant from the will; for to operate this change, by any method that overrides, or even omits our concurrent choice, is not to change our character, but to demolish our personality. A great power then is wanted, which can pierce, and press, and draw, and sway, and, as it were, new-crystallize the soul, which still is not any kind of force. And considering what the change is which the Scripture itself proposes, we even look to see some different, higher kind of power brought into the field, and magnified as the hope of our salvation. In Christ, accordingly, we find this higher power so magnified—a power that we may call the Moral Power of God. And the representation is that Christ, by his incarnate life and passion, becomes that higher kind of power—executing, in that manner, or by virtue of that kind of power, the internal new creation, for which, as was shown in the last chapter, he came into the world.

Christ in his sacrifice becomes the moral power of God.

My present chapter, accordingly, will be occupied with the fact that Christ's saving mission turns upon his having become such a power. And then my next will show how he becomes such a power in the facts of his personal history.

In pursuing the subject assigned, a first matter will

be to distinguish accurately what we are to understand, by the supposed moral power.

Is it then that Christ is to be such a kind of power as we mean when we speak of example? Certainly not, if we take the word example, in its most proper and common signification. An example, we conceive, is a model that we copy, and set ourselves, by our own will, to reproduce in ourselves. Many teachers have been rising up, in all the past ages, and propounding it as the true theory of the gospel, that Christ came forth to be a Redeemer, in the way of being an example. But no theory of the kind has ever been able, under the very meager and restricted word example, to get any show of general acceptance. For the truth is that we consciously want something better than a model to be copied; some vehicle of God to the soul, that is able to copy God into it. Something is wanted that shall go before and beget, in us, the disposition to copy an example.

His moral power is not the power of example.

Sometimes the example theory has been stated broadly enough to include the demonstration of the divine love in Christ's life. Sometimes, also, this demonstration of the divine love, apart from any thing said of example, has been put forward as the object of his mission; love being regarded as the sufficient reconciling power of God on human character. But no such view has ever gained a wide acceptance; not for the reason, I must think, that God's love is not a great power on the feeling of mankind, or that, when it is revealed in

Not by the revelation merely of God's love.

Christ, it does not go far to make up the requisite power; but that consciously we need other and sturdier elements to produce impressions, equal to the change proposed in our spiritual transformation. Mere love, as we commonly conceive the word, suffers disrespect. We need somehow to feel that the love is a principled love, grounded in immovable convictions of right. There is no so very intense power in love, when descending even to the greatest possible sacrifice, if we are allowed to think of it as being only a mood of natural softness, or merely instinctive sympathy. Many animals will rush after one of their kind in distress, and pitch themselves into the toils of their captors, by mere sympathy of kind. To magnify love therefore, even the love of the cross, as being itself the new-creating power of God, would be a very great mistake, if the righteous rule of God is not somehow included. When Jesus in his sacrifice takes our lot upon his feeling, and goes even to the cross for us, we need also to conceive that he does this for the right, and because the everlasting word of righteousness commands him. Not all that belongs to this matter can be said as effectively here as it may be, when we come, in the Third Part, to consider the relations of the sacrifice to law. So much is added here only to fasten, or sufficiently affirm, the conviction, that no purely favoring, sympathetic kind of intervention, however self-sacrificing, can be any sufficient power on character to be a salvation.

By the moral power of God, or of Christ as the manifested reality of God, we understand, comprehensively

the power of all God's moral perfections, in one word, of his greatness. And by greatness we mean greatness of character; for there is no greatness in force, no greatness in quantity, or height, or antiquity of being, no greatness any where but in character. In this it is that so great moral power is conceived to be developed, in the self-devoting sacrifice of Christ's life and death.

The moral power of God is the greatness of God.

It would even be a kind of irreverence, not to assume that God is mightiest, and capable of doing the most difficult things, even as great men are, by his moral power. Alexander, for example, leads the tramp of force and victory across resisting empires, finally to be vanquished, in turn, by the fascinations of a woman, and to die, a second time vanquished by his appetites, in a fit of debauch. But those great souls of his countrymen who rose into power by their virtues, and died for their virtue's sake, such as Aristides and Socrates—why they keep on vanquishing the world and binding it to the sway of their character, and will as long as it exists. The power of Napoleon is, in the same way, force; that of Washington, character. One is the terror of his time, and when his time is over, is no more any thing but a prodigy of force remembered. The other holds the spell of a morally great, ever-increasing name, felt by all rulers of men both good and bad, penetrating more and more resistlessly the revolutions, and laws, and legislations of all proudest empires, and newest commonwealths of the globe; more to be felt than now, just in proportion as the world grows older, and is

more advanced in good. So also it is that God is doing always, and to do, what is most difficult and nearest to being impossible, not by his omnipotence, but by his great character and feeling. The greatest power of God. When he commands—"Let there be light"—and the new-sprung day flashes athwart all orbs and skies, it is indeed a mighty and sublime power that he wields, but his great character in good, what he is, and loves to do, and is willing to suffer, as discovered in the incarnate mission of Jesus—how much vaster, and nobler, and more sovereign, is the power, new-creating all the fallen sentiments, affinities and choices of souls. It did not burst fiat-like on the world, six thousand years ago, and stop, but it flows out continuously, as a river of great sentiment, bathing men's feeling as a power of life, raising their conceptions of good and of God, and dissolving their bad will into conscious affinity with His. Doing this from age to age, it will finally transform, we can easily believe, the general apostasy and corruption of mankind. Now that Christ came into the world to be this kind of power, was most evidently the impression that he had of himself. Thus it is to this very point that he is brought, in his remarkable discourse on regeneration, where he passes on to say—"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Christ has this conception himself. According to the analogy of the figure referred to, he is here, and is in fact to be lifted up, that he may be a quickening,

healing power—"eternal life"—in men's hearts. The representation is that he will be the regenerator of souls, not by action upon them, but by what he is to sight. There shall be that in him, that quality of good and glory, which, being fixedly beheld, shall go through all inmost distemper and subtilty of sin, as a power of immortal healing.

It comes to very nearly the same thing when he says —"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The supposition is, we perceive, that he is going to the cross for men, and that by that powerful argument he will draw them, as by new-born affinities, away from their sin, to a lasting and fixed unity with his person.

We distinguish the same thing under a different version, where he gives it so expressly as the meaning of his errand, that he is come to be the king of truth, and sway men's hearts by the truth-power of his life. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." In a very important sense, he is to be the truth; for all that is most quickening in God's feeling and beauty, all that is most powerful to sway the convictions and constrain the free allegiance of souls, is to be shown, not in his doctrine only, but more mightily far in his healing ministry and death of sorrow. And so he is to gain subjects for his kingdom, not so much by any direct doing in them, or action upon them, but by the sublime royalties of his character.

Beginning thus at the conception Christ has of himself, we should naturally look to find expectations going before, and impressions of witnesses coming after, holding a perceptible agreement with him. Thus we have a picture given of his coming in the stately Messianic Psalm—"He shall come down, like rain upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth." Being thus like rain, or like showers, he will quicken men's hearts by absorption, as it were, of his fertilizing properties, and so take "dominion" from within.

The ancient Scriptures have this conception of the Messiah.

So the famous vicarious prophecy of Isaiah is a prophecy, in fact, of power. He shall heal by the "stripes" of his patience. He shall even be a great conqueror—not by his prowess, but by his suffering death. "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death." To the same general effect is the prophet's word, when he writes—"Who is this that cometh from Edom, and with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness mighty to save." There is a mixture of suffering and power, crowding each the other, as it were, all through the picture. His apparel is "red" with stains of blood, and yet it is "glorious

apparel." He "treads the wine-press alone," yet "travels in the greatness of his strength." Finding "none to help or uphold," he is none the less "mighty to save." And what is the solution but that power is to be the fruit of his suffering?

It is generally understood that Ezekiel's rill, flowing out from under the threshhold of the temple, widening into a river in its flow, and pouring on through desert regions, "healing the fishes," and causing "every thing to live, where it cometh," fringing also its border all the way with trees whose "fruit shall be for meat and leaf for medicine," is a picture of that originally despised but ever increasing power, by which Christ will renovate and restore the world. It will be that kind of power which is at once silent and sovereign, moving by no shock, but only as health, when it creeps in after, and along the subtle paths of disease.

With these more ancient prophecies and expectations the contemporaneous impressions of John correspond. He announces a great king at hand, who shall be so transcendent in dignity, that he himself shall not be worthy even to untie his sandals—"He must increase, but I must decrease." Some of the imagery he employs is energetic and almost violent; but when the Great Expected appears, what but this is the greeting he offers—"Behold the Lamb of God!"

In this manner we are prepared, when we come to the apostles and first preachers after Christ, to hear them break into expression, by some word more adequate and thought more definite. And therefore we are

not surprised, when they put down their testimony, in the word *power*. And this we shall find is their impression of the gospel and of Christ as the sum of it. They have other, more circuitous and tropical expressions, but when they come directly to the matter as it is, they say POWER—"declared to be the Son of God with power"—"to us who are saved the power of God"—"the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

His apostles coming after have the same.

Of these three several testimonies, the first is connected with the fact of the resurrection. "Declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead;" with which another expression corresponds; viz., "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection." The impression is not that there is any such renewing power in Christ's resurrection itself, but that in the fact of his resurrection comes out the real height of his person, and that so the moral wonder of his sacrifice is there, for the first time, discovered. Before in his death he was but a man, a defeated and prostrate man, covered with unutterable ignominy; but when he rises, the fact of some transcendent nature is discovered in him, and a great revision follows in the impressions had of his person. He becomes, at once, a wholly different being, whose life and death take, both, a wholly different meaning. In respect of the flesh, he was the seed of David; now he is the Son of God with power, according to the higher divine Spirit working in his person.

In the second passage cited, the preaching of the

cross is the subject, and any kind of preaching, which undertakes to catch men by fine words, and tricks of philosophic subtilty, is deprecated, because it makes "the preaching of the cross of none effect." All genuine effect, the apostle is showing, comes of the power of the cross itself. This to us who are saved is even the power of God; or, as he says again shortly after, unable to get away from the ruling thought of his ministry—"Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Again, in the third passage, the apostle is giving his deliberate account of the gospel, that which constitutes the essential meaning and operative value of the gift—"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Therefore he was always sighing—"that the power of Christ may rest on me." I know not how it is, but this word *power* appears to pass for nothing in common use, and the passage is apparently understood as if it read only—"the way of God unto salvation"—the understanding had of it being, that Christ has purchased forgiveness for us and made salvation possible and nothing more. Whereas it was the particular intent of the apostle to give his deliberate summation of the gospel in this very word power, and to magnify Christ in it, as being the new-creating life of God in souls—in that sense and no other a salvation. And if any one still doubts, whether he has any so stringent and decisive meaning in this word, imagining that he does not think, after all, of asserting any thing in that

precise way, but only throws in the word for declamation's sake, as a word of emphasis, or enhancement, it will be found that he uses the word again in a connection that shows him to be thinking specially of the moral efficacy of Christ, and also with a predicate of degree that fixes the meaning. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness [saying, "Let there be light"] hath shined [with a like moral sovereignty] in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" [as if vessels of power in ourselves.] If he means, after all, to only magnify the gospel in a declamatory way by this word *power*, why does he fasten our attention down upon the degree of its efficacy by this predicate of "excellency?"

Thus far we appeal to Paul. Peter also expresses the same conception of the gospel, only less vigorously, when he says—"According as his divine power hath given us all things pertaining to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him [Christ] that hath called us by glory and virtue;" that is, by the manifested glory and excellence of his life. The English translation, "called us *to* glory and virtue" it is generally agreed is mistaken.

John again expresses the same thing in many ways, as when he says—"the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin;" or again when he says—"Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins." To cleanse us from all sin, to take it away, by

force of what is manifested in him, is the same thing as to be the moral power which masters the soul's inward disorder, and renews it in holiness of life.

I will not go on to multiply citations, but, lest it should seem that we are obliged to glean for them, I will simply say that this moral power of God in Christ bears such immense sway, in the feeling of all the New Testament writers, that they are continually seizing on this or that image, or fact of physical power in the world, to give their impression. Even the most forcefully violent and terrible images are laid hold of—any thing to represent the all-subduing, all-transforming, inwardly renewing, outwardly dominating efficacy of Christ and the kingdom of God, revealed in his Messiahship.

The apostles make use of all most violent figures when they speak of it.

They conceive him as a wondrously detergent power in souls, "washing and making white," "cleansing from sin," "purging the conscience."

They conceive him going through the sick, disordered mind, even as some healing medicine, or miracle, goes through the hidden maladies of bodies, to search out and expel disease.

They call him a power of leaven, brought into the world to work; heaving in the general mass and willful stupor of it, till all is leavened.

They call him the day-star, because he heralds the mind's day and the expulsion of its dreadful night; and the light, because the instant flash of that element strikes farthest into God's physical empire, and changes most the face of it; and the sun, because the exhaustless heat

of that central fire in the sky, has power to keep the planet in habitable order, and even to vivify the otherwise dead matter of it in processes of growth.

They call him Life itself, because the quickening spell of it, among the world's dead atoms, carpets the ground with beauty and fills the air itself with hovering motion.

They conceive him as a fire that is already kindled, in the rubbish of the world's prescriptive falsities and wrongs, whose burning nothing can stop.

His kingdom and the resistless moral power of his gospel, they resemble to lightning, darting from east to west, and flashing across all boundaries.

His word they compare to the swing of an earthquake, "shaking not the earth only but also heaven"—shaking down, that is, all stoutest fabrics of error and prescriptive wrong, and leaving nothing to stand, but that immortal truth and good that can not be shaken.*

They describe him in his cross as an immense, world-compelling attraction, moving such control in the once dead feelings and convictions of sin as will "draw all men unto him," even as the whirlpool draws all drifting objects and even passing ships into its vortex.

He is even to be a chariot of thunder in the clouds—"coming in the clouds of heaven in power and great

* The passage referred to (Heb. xii, 26–7) is commonly interpreted as relating to the second coming of Christ, and perhaps it is partly so used by the apostle, but the promise cited from Haggai (ii, 6) plainly relates to his first coming, in which view the things shaken are the old religion; those which remain and can not be shaken, the gospel.

glory"—by that oriental sign of royal majesty, showing that the kingdom of God is come with power.

It is, in short, as if some new, great power had broken, or was breaking into the world, in the life and cross of Jesus, which all the known causations of the land, and sea, and air, and sky, can but feebly represent. The difficulty appears to be that no force-figures can be forcible enough, to express the wondrously divine, all-renovating, all-revolutionizing moral power of God in the gospel of his Son.

The day of his coming coincides.

I have only to add, as a considerable argument for the moral view of Christ and his sacrifice, in distinction from all others, that the time of his coming coincides with this only. Had he come, having it for his principal object to satisfy God's justice and be substituted, in that manner, for the release of transgression, there appears to be no reason why he should have delayed his coming for so many ages. If the effect was to be on God, God was just as capable, at the very first, of feeling the worth of his sacrifice, as at any time afterward; and, if this was to be the salvation, why should the salvation be delayed? But if he came to be the moral power of God on men, nothing is so difficult as the due development of any such moral power; because the capacity, or necessary receptivity for it, has itself to be prepared. Thus, if Christ had come to the monster age before the flood, when raw force was every thing, and moral greatness nothing, his death and passion, all the

significance of his suffering and sacrifice, would have been lost, and probably would not even have been preserved in the remembrance of history. The world was too coarse, and too deep in the force-principle of violence, to apprehend a visitation so thoughtful and deep in the merit of character. There was no room or receptivity, as yet, for Christ in the world. A long-drawn scheme of economy is previously needed, to prepare that receptivity; a drill of outward sacrifice and ceremony, a providential milling of captivities, deliverances, wars, plagues, and other public judgments, commemorated in hymns, interpreted and set home by the preaching of a prophet ministry; till finally there is a culture of mind, or of moral perception produced, that is sufficiently advanced, to receive the meaning of Christ in his sacrifice, and allow him to get an accepted place in the moral impressions of mankind. Conceiving, in this manner, that he came to be the moral power of God on character, there is good and sufficient reason for his delay. He came as soon as he could, or, as the Scripture says, "in the fullness of time;" came in fact, at the very earliest moment, when it was possible to get hold of history.

Indeed, so very slow is the world in getting ready for the due impression of what lies in moral power, that only a very partial opening to it is prepared even now. The world is still too coarse, too deep in sense and the force-principle, to feel, in any but a very small degree, the moral power of God in the Christian history Slowly and sluggishly this higher sense is unfolding,

but there is a perceptible advance, and we may anticipate the day, when there will be a sense opened wide enough for Christ, in his true power, to enter; thus to fill, and new-create in good, all souls that live. Then, and not till then, will it be known how grand a fact the moral power of God in the person of his Son may be.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW HE BECOMES SO GREAT A POWER.

In his descent to the flesh, we might naturally expect that Christ would bring all deific perfections with him, and have them expressed in his person. And this, indeed, is true; but with the large qualification that they will be expressed only by degrees, and under conditions of time; that is, under such laws of expression as pertain to humanity. In one view, God is emptied of his perfections in becoming incarnate, and has them all to acquire and bring into evidence, by the same process of right living that obtains character and weight for men. Otherwise the incarnation would be no real fact. It must be with Christ as with men, and moral power, as we commonly use the term, among men, is the power that a man finally gets, by the courses and achievements of a great and worthy life, to impress and sway other men. The subject may be dead, or he may be still alive; his name awakens homage, inspires, becomes an argument in itself, by which opposition is concluded, or assent determined; all because of some great virtue, or victory, or championship of right and beneficence, accomplished in his life. It is a power cumulative in its very nature. Once the man had it

not; as regards any such thing, he was virtually nobody. But the process of his life was such that power grew up with it, rolled up into volume and majesty, in the facts and doings of it. If he was a benefactor, like Howard, his name became a power, through the trains of good, led on by his works and sacrifices. If he was a saint, like Savonarola or George Fox, his inspirations obtained for him the homage due to God's oracle. If he was a preacher, like Whitefield, the immense crowds, conquered by his words, prepared other and greater crowds, to be half-conquered even before he spoke. If he was a hero, proved by many righteous victories, his soldiers went to the fight, with victory perched on their banners beforehand. In all such examples, we perceive that moral power is a growth, and the result of a process. It is what a man once had not, but now has. It was not in his nature, as a child, or a youth, or even as a man; but it has been conquered, or obtained by the conduct of his life. We sometimes say that it is contributed by the admiration of men, but it is not contributed gratis; it is won by deeds and represented by facts.

Moral power is cumulative.

And this, exactly, is what we are to understand by the moral power of God in the gospel of his Son. It is a new kind of power—the greatest and most sovereign power we know—which God undertakes to have by obtaining it, under the human laws and methods. Hence the incarnation. God had a certain kind of power before; viz., that which

Attribute power is different.

may be called attribute power. By attributes we mean what we attribute to God, when we think God, or unfold our idea of God as the Absolute Being. As being infinite and absolute, we ascribe to him certain attributes, or perfections. Such attributes, or perfections, are a kind of abstract excellence, such as we bring out, or generate, by our own intellectual refinements on the idea of God, to answer to our own intellectual demands. Still, as God is infinite, the perfections are distant. We hardly dare think them, if we could, into our finite molds. We almost reason them away. Thus God, we say, is omnipotent, therefore he will bring to pass exactly all that he desires; and does, in fact, desire nothing but what comes to pass. Again, God is eternally sovereign; therefore he regrets nothing, as we do; for what he wills he does. Again, God is omniscient, knowing every thing beforehand; therefore every thing is immovably fixed beforehand. Still again, God is infinitely happy; therefore he is impassible and can not suffer in feeling any way. Yet once more, God is immutably just; and must therefore have his justice satisfied by the necessary quantum of suffering. And so it turns out that, in making up an attribute power, we very nearly think away, or annihilate, all that creates an effective impress on our sentiment and character. We make him great, but we also make him thin and cold. We feel him as a platitude, more than as a person. His great attributes become dry words; a kind of milky-way over our heads; vast enough in the matter of extension, but evanescently dim to our feeling.

This result had been mitigated, somewhat, by his works and word and Providence, before the coming of Christ. But the tendency still was to carry back all the more genial impressions thus unfolded, and merge them in the attribute-power, by which, as an unseen, infinite being, we had before contrived to think and to measure his character. Till, finally, in the fullness of time, he is constrained to institute a new movement on the world, in the incarnation of his Son. The undertaking is to obtain, through him, and the facts and processes of his life, a new kind of power; viz., moral power; the same that is obtained by human conduct under human methods. It will be divine power still, only it will not be attribute power. That is the power of his idea. This new power is to be the power cumulative, gained by Him among men, as truly as they gain it with each other. Only it will turn out, in the end, to be the grandest, closest to feeling, most impressive, most soul-renovating, and spiritually sublime power that was ever obtained in this or any other world.

Christ incarnated to obtain moral power.

Hence that peculiar and continually recurring set of expressions in the New Testament which appear, in one form or another, to attribute so much to the *name* of Jesus. For if we can rightly distinguish between a name and a fame, if we can exclude the airy fictions of repute and coveted applause, conceiving that the name obtained by Jesus signifies the condensed reality of all that he is, no power will be so genuine, or vital, or so like a sun-rising on transgression.

There will, accordingly, be distinguished, more or less clearly, in all the varied uses referred to, some notion or associated impression of power; as if there were embodied, somehow, in this name Jesus, a fund of universal soul-help; or as if, being in this name were the same as to be in a really divine element of good. This too, for the manifest reason, that the whole personal life-history of Jesus, all that he was, felt, suffered, and did, is gathered into it, and was originally designed to be, that he might be the new moral power of God. Thus, to glorify this name and make it such a power is seen to be God's purpose from the first. Which purpose glimmers dimly in the direction, "they shall call his name Jesus;" for it is to be a saving name. And again it appears more visibly afterwards, when he answers the prayer of Jesus, "Father glorify [in me] thy name," by a voice out of heaven, saying—"I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." And again, at a still later period, when his work is complete, and he gives it to his apostle to say, magnifying both the power and the name together —"showing us the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, by setting him [in our mortal apprehension] above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come"

The "name" of Jesus is the power he obtains.

Christ, also, we can easily perceive, has a like impression of God's purpose in his life; as when speaking of, or to, or before, his disciples, he says—"gathered in my name;" "ask in my name;" "cast out devils in

my name;" "a chosen vessel in my name;" "I have manifested thy name."

How the apostles do every thing in this name.

The apostles coming after are even more explicit, as we should expect them to be. They even dare to speak of this great name as a name obtained—"Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath, for his heritage, obtained a more excellent name than they." They are "baptized" in it. They are "justified in" it. They "do all for" it. They "are reproached for" it. They "teach in his name." They "preach it boldly." They promise salvation to such as "believe in it." They "have life through" it. They work miracles and say, "by the name of Jesus this man is made whole." Having it consciously upon them, in their inmost feeling, they "hold it fast," and are "hated of all men for" it. Every one "that nameth it" they conceive must "depart from all iniquity." And, last of all, they read this name "in the forehead" of the glorified. How could it be otherwise when God Himself comes into human life, and makes himself a name there, by human acts, in human molds of conduct, that represents even the pleroma of his divine perfections?

Accordingly when, Peter, another apostle, declares that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we can be saved," we shall not take the "name whereby" as a cold, theoretic, far-off method of reference, to some theologic matter of judicial satisfaction, but as meaning just what the language implies; viz., power—the power of God unto salvation.

We only recognize in his language the fact, so abundantly testified in all the other terms referred to, that the incarnate ministry and life of Christ are designed of God, to obtain, and have, in fact, obtained a new moral power for the regeneration of lost men. What we say, at this point, is not theory but is constantly affirmed by the New Testament Scriptures.

Assuming, now, this view of Christ and his gospel, it remains to go forward and trace the process of his life; showing how, and by what methods, and stages, this grand, cumulative power is rolled up into the requisite body and volume.

How he obtains the name.

Of course, it will be understood, that Christ is not aiming directly at the obtaining of such a name, or such a power of impression. He can not, of course, be ignorant of the result to be perfected thus in his life. Not even a man of ordinary intelligence will be ignorant of the respect and homage that must be obtained, by what is morally great and good in action. But that is not the motive for such action. It was not with Christ. As some great hero thinks of his country, when he takes the field to serve his country, so Christ thought of the world to be saved, when he came to save the world. He came with the lost world upon his feeling, gave himself to it in sacrifice, bore it in vicarious sacrifice, pleaded with it, suffered for it, made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant and a servant's labor; whereupon God hath highly exalted him and given him a name

that is above every name, a power that is itself salvation. The moral power obtained is a result and not any direct motive.

How then does it come?—let us see if we can trace the process. When the holy child is born, he has no moral power at all. The halo which the painters show about his head is not there. He is simply the child of two very humble people, in a very mean provincial town. There was a good deal more circumstance and prospect in Washington's infancy than in his; and yet the moral power of that little one's name, George, had nothing of the ring that a great life and history will afterwards give it. Nor is it any thing if the name is called Immanuel; nobody will see any meaning in that, at present. The meaning itself is yet to be obtained.

Nothing in his name at the first.

There had been some remarkable prophecies over the child, not much regarded, of course, till afterwards. A few very pleasant facts are given concerning his childhood and youth, which will signify a great deal more, as recollections, than they do to present observation. His look and manner, as he grows up, are winning to every body. He is subject to his parents and a model of filial duty. His custom is to be always at the synagogue worship. On a certain occasion, when he is but twelve years old, he astonishes the doctors of the temple, by his wonderful questions; and there it is that he drops the remarkable intimation, specially noted by his mother, that he "must be about his Father's business;" in which, as we can see, he already

begins to be a little conscious of his great calling; which makes it all the more remarkable, that he still struggles on eighteen years longer, hurried by no forwardness, or impatience, till the full idea of his great ministry takes possession of his life. During this whole period, he confesses no sin, and, as far as we can judge, rectifies no mistake; and, if these negative facts had been noted by any body, as plainly they could not be, his piety would certainly have been seen to be of a most singular and even superhuman order.

The name is not obtained before his ministry.

On the whole, it does not appear that, previous to entering on his public ministry, when he was thirty years old, he has done any thing more than to beautifully and exactly fulfill his duties. His name is good, true, lovely; but as far as possible from being a name above every name. A certain moral power is felt in him, of course, by those who are with him, but what he is to be, in this respect, is, as yet, quite hidden from discovery.

But the time has now come for his great ministry to begin. The dim presentiment of his work, which he called his "Father's business" opens into a definite, settled consciousness of his call. As it were by the revelation of the Spirit, he clearly perceives what he is to do, and what to suffer; that he is to go down into the hell of the world's corporate evil, to be wounded and galled by the world's malice, and bear the burden of the world's undoing as a charge upon his love; and so, by agonies of sacrifice, including a most bitter death, to reconcile men to God and establish the eternal kingdom

of God in their hearts. The work attracts him, and yet his soul, or at least his natural human feeling, recoils. Smitten, as it were, by a kind of horror, he is hurried off into the wilderness, to wrestle with his temptations; groaning there alone, under the heavy load he is to bear, and bowing his reluctant humanity to the call, by the discipline of fasting. He comes out victorious, but as a victor spent. The angels of God recruit him by their tender and cheering ministry, and he goes to his work.

No man of the race, it is quite safe to say, ever went to the calling of his life against impediments of natural sensibility so appalling. Men do often make great and heroic sacrifices in a cause already undertaken, but he undertakes the forlornest, most appalling sacrifice, fully perceiving what it is to be beforehand. Men have the brave will raised in them afterwards, by the heat of encounter; he has his victory at the beginning, alone, in a desert, where only love and God, in the moods of silence, come to his aid. In this simple beginning of Christ, there is character enough to create a moral power never before conceived, never since realized. But it does not appear that even the facts of his temptation were made known, till some time after—when, or how, we can only guess. He goes into his work, therefore, as a merely common man, a Nazarene carpenter, respected for nothing, save as he compels respect by his works and his words.

Meantime John has been testifying, as a prophet, of another, who is to come, or is even now at hand, whose

shoes even he is not worthy to untie, and by whom the kingdom of heaven is to be set up on earth. And this other, viz., Jesus, comes to him shortly after to be baptized; when he breaks out, in prophetic vision, as soon as he perceives him coming—"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." The consecrating dove lights upon him in his baptism, and a voice out of heaven declares—"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And yet even John is so little impressed, or so little believes in what he hears, shortly after, of his miracles and his doctrine, that he sends to inquire, as if he might still be only an ordinary man, possibly an impostor, "art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" As yet he has not made impression enough for God's love and power by his ministry, beautiful and wonderful as it is, to even hold a prophet's opinion of him up to the pitch of his own prophetic testimony!

How the ministry goes on

But he goes on with his ministry for three years; traveling on foot, sleeping in desert places and upon the mountain tops, associating mostly with the poor and humble, who have scarcely cultivation enough to yield him any fit return of sympathy, or even to be duly impressed by his miracles. The learned and select are alienated from him, partly for this reason. They deny his miracles, or they charge them openly to his conspiracy with devils.

His doctrine is wonderful to every body—what can be more wonderful than his sermon on the mount? The people were astonished and rightly; for there was

never any such utterance in the world before. There was no learning, no cabalistic juggle in his words; he taught them "as one having authority and not as the scribes." This kind of impression was always made by him, and the puzzle was that a man who had never learned—the son of a mean provincial, in a mean provincial town—could discourse with such intelligence, in a manner so nearly divine. A company of bailiffs sent out to arrest him, just before the close of his ministry, were as profoundly impressed by his manner and words as if the angel in the sun had spoken to them, and could only go back and report—"Never man spake like this man." And yet it does not appear that Christ grew, at all, on the public sentiment, by means of his discourses. He only mystified, a little, the public feeling, and made himself a character about as much more suspicious and dangerous.

A few persons of a specially honest and fair temperament were so wrought upon, by his miracles, and manners, and words, as to feel the impression of some very strange, or even sacred power in his life; Mary and Martha, for example, and the centurion, and the two senators Nicodemus and Joseph, and probably all his apostles—not excluding even Pilate, who was evidently shaken out of all confidence, by the sense he had of some strange quality, in the manner and bearing of the victim he is compelled to sacrifice. And yet there was a certain wavering, probably, in all these minds, as if they could not imagine him, or guess, after all, how he might turn out. Their misgivings half took away what

would have been their opinions. What they felt in him, therefore, was not so much a power as a possibility of power. Nothing was immovably fastened, save, perhaps, in the centurion, or the woman that came with her box of ointment, and, it may be, one or two other of his disciples. Great things have been done by him, wonderful beauties of feeling unfolded, and yet all these are felt dubiously under a kind of peradventure.

And the reason plainly enough is, that no point of view, as respects his person, has yet been attained to, that will verify the facts and impressions of his life. His friends think he is the Messiah, but they have only the faintest notions who the Messiah is, or is to be. His person is not conceived, and so it results that his doings make a seemingly rough compound of strange things, jumbled together in a kind of moral confusion that has really no right to be very impressive.

As we go back to inventory the matter of his life, we find some things that are wonderfully sublime, some that are deep in the spirit of wisdom, some that repel and hold aloof, some that bear a grotesque look, some that are attractive and subduing to feeling as nothing else ever was, and some that even discourage confidence.

Sublime and wise, and so far impressive.

The sublime things are such as these; the virtue that went out of him, when faith touched the hem of his garment; the raising of the widow's son; the healing of the lepers; the voice out of heaven; the stilling of the sea; the transfiguration, and all the matter of his last discourses and prayer as given by John. In these

facts the glory of deity and of heaven appears to be let into the world, and made visible in it. But they were witnessed only here and there, and, for the most part, by different classes of persons; creating rather mazes of wonder, than a settled feeling of homage and awe.

The wise things, such as indicated even a marvelous diplomatic talent, in the good sense of the term, were his answer to the Pharisees, who came to entangle him with the government—"Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;" the confusion he brought upon the chief priests and elders, coming with a like artful design, when he answered their question—"By what authority," by another question—"The baptism of John, whence was it;" his reply to the puzzle or catch of the Sadducees—"Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be," by his Scripture citation and his inference from it—"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" and more than all by his fearfully impressive reserve, and the brief, but immensely significant intimations he gave to Pilate about his kingship, as the king of truth; taking, in fact, all courage out of the man, by the superstitious dread awakened in his feeling. No teacher, prophet, or champion of truth, ever evinced such complete insight of men, or was ever able to reduce them to utter confusion so easily, by his mastery of their motives and points of weakness. His profoundly artful enemies in fact, were all in sunlight before him.

The points in which he repelled and set aloof multi

tudes that came to be his clients and followers were such as these—he would not have a partisan, and as most men expect to be taken as partisans, when they adhere to another, they were chilled and could not long follow him; he offended their Jewish prejudices without scruple in the matter of the Sabbath, and also in the matter of their exclusive nationality by the declaration of a universal kingdom, where the men of all nations should come from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; he turned the preposterous learning of the lawyers and scribes to derision; he galled the consciences of many who were righteous in the law, by his terrible exposures of their motives and their hearts; he made God fearfully great and holy by his doctrine of future punishment; his terms of discipleship were uninviting and severe—ye shall be baptized with my baptism, hated of all men for my name's sake; take up your cross and follow me; if any man hate not father and mother, yea, and his own life also, he can not be my disciple; resist not evil; consent to serve and suffer, even as the Son of man came to minister, and give his life a ransom for many. He made nothing of the popular favor, nothing of gaining or retaining friends, which, though it was one of the sublimities even of his character, as regarded by us, was in fact only a continual offense to the men of his time.

Sometimes he repelled by his manner.

Some few of the facts of his life bore a grotesque look, at the time, and could easily be turned to ridicule,

as indeed they have been since. Thus when the woman is brought before him craftily, by her accusers, to obtain his judgment on her sin, he writes abstractedly on the ground, lifting himself up at length to shoot in his bolt—"let him that is without sin cast the first stone"—and then stooping down again to write on the ground as before. This would be ridiculed in a man, as a figure of mere hocus-pocus. And yet the mystery of the manner, the silence, the abstraction, roused the consciences of the accusers to such a degree, that they heard even terrible thunders within, and shortly drew off, one by one, and left him quite alone. No most eloquent sermon could have done as much. No stroke of natural eloquence was ever more impressive. We have also what some have called another grotesque figure in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Multitudes go forth to meet him, branches of palm-trees are thrown in his way, as if it were the day of his crowning, and the great concourse of the people and the children in the temple, after he arrives, fill the air, as it were by some outburst of inspiration, with the cry, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" And yet he comes riding upon an ass! Neither does it raise at all the dignity of his figure, that he fulfills a prophecy; for that is probably not observed at the time. Besides a prophecy that requires the great Messiah to celebrate his triumph in such a figure puts inspiration itself under a ban of derision, till we are able to see as could not be seen till some time after, how

Sometimes he was grotesque.

this outward type represents a king riding into power among men, through a suffering and sadly humiliated life. What livery or mounting then will he most fitly take for his type, in such a procession? on what shall he ride, but on one of the humblest and least airy-gaited of the animals?

His tenderness.

The facts, in which he drew on human feeling by the loving and subduing energy of his own, compose the staple, we may almost say, of his life. All his healings, raised in dignity by the manifestly divine power in which they are wrought, display such assiduity of kindness and devotion to the forlornest conditions and bitterest pains of a world under sin, as to make up a kind of gospel in the plane of bodily treatment; engaging most tenderly just those fallen sensibilities that must be engaged, and yet could not, by mere demonstrations of spiritual excellence. His union to the poor in their sad lot, and his beautiful tenderness to their wants and troubles, attract their personal sympathy and gratitude in the same manner. His call, "come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden"—it is as if heaven's love to the world were going forth to its weary, sin-burdened millions, from a heart large enough to contain them all, and strong enough to give them rest. His love to little children takes the feeling, not of children, but of every body. His domestic, home-like feeling when with Mary and Martha, and his yet more intensely human sensibility, when he weeps and groans at the grave-side of their brother—what a spell of more than mortal majesty is there in

his, "Lazarus, come forth," answered by the bursting tomb and rising form of the man! How touching his delicacy, when, by loving anticipation, he calls those "friends," who were not, and speaks of his death as a laying down of his life for his friends. What woman's heart will not be drawn to him by his manner to Mary, when she comes to him with her box of ointment, and when he commends her, in her simple tribute of love, as he never did any other of mankind; telling her that her little gospel shall go down the ages with his, to be witnessed for a memorial of her. His "one of you shall betray me," how sadly and tenderly is it spoken, bitter and dreadful as the charge it lays most certainly is. His whole farewell discourse and prayer, as given at large by John, full of the loftiest assumptions, and tenderest promises, and lowliest protestations of brotherhood—warm, and gentle, and strong, as inherent divinity should be—what greater, more subduing power of love, on a race broken loose from God, can we even imagine to be embodied in mortal words!

Baffled expectation.

And yet, over against all these affecting and subduing demonstrations in his life, there were a great many things, we know, which, at the time, seemed even to discourage confidence in him. For example he was baffling always the expectations of his friends; they could hardly name an expectation, and they had abundance of them, which he did not forthwith take away, by the notification of some loss, or cross of dejection, which to them wore a look totally opposite to every feeling they had respecting the

great Messiah. Not to multiply instances in which he tried their confidence by other methods, we pass directly to the two great closing facts of his life, his agony and crucifixion. His work is now done, and nothing remains, but to let others bring him to the murderous end they are planning to accomplish. His whole feeling is now loose upon him, respited by no occupation; and the dreadful burdens of concern for men, which his divine love, too strong for the body, rolls down upon him, press him, as it were, to the ground. He beholds the corporate curse, too, of the world's evil and madness just ready to burst upon his person, and though he is not moved by fear, his pure innocence struggles heavily, with instinctive horror, before that retributive phrensy, which is going to baptize itself in his blood! No so grand mystery of divine feeling was ever before or after set before the gaze of mortals. But his friends are at no point of view, where they can even begin to conceive it. His person, his errand, his work, are as yet wholly beyond the reach even of their guesses. They have seen strange gleams of quality in him, they have been drawn, repelled, impressed, astounded and thoroughly posed by his mystery, and they only try to settle the whirl of their brain by calling him a great prophet, Messiah, the Christ, thinking him virtually always as a man. And now, in the agony, just after his triumphal entry into the city, when they look to see him rise and take on his kingship, he collapses in weakness, without any visible reason; falling on the ground, groaning, writhing, dripping in bloody sweat.

like grapes in the wine-press, and calling on God and men for help, in meeting some unknown calamity that he does not name. It is as if he were just at the end of his pretensions, and struggling, as a convict might, under his impending doom. All heart is taken away from his disciples at once; their confidence in him is fatally broken; as we can plainly see in the fact that when he is arrested, an hour or two after, they forsake him utterly. Peter makes one or two wild slashes for him with his sword, and then he too is gone; only he will hang about the hall when the trial goes on, carefully denying his discipleship.

His death takes away all confidence.

In this manner Jesus goes to his cross; and the manner of his trial and death, though supported with a transcendent dignity on his part, that makes him even the chief figure in the scene, are yet so thoroughly contemptible and ignominious, that the poor disciples are obliged to confess to themselves, if not to others, that their much loved Messiah is now stamped as another exploded pretender! A great reaction begins, however, to be visible in the minds of the multitude. As the Roman governor himself, before whom he was dragged to a mock trial for sedition, was quite shaken out of self-possession, by the dignity of his manner under the questioning—quailing visibly in the sense of a mysterious something in the man, justifying, equivocating, consenting, condemning, giving him up to his accusers, and washing his hands to be clear of the innocent blood—so in the death-scene of the cross, slave's death though

it be, in the outward ignominy of the form, the multitude grow serious, and drop out their jeers in awe of his felt majesty, and finally go home, at another swing of oscillation, smiting their breasts in dumb confession of their murderous crime. They had expected nothing of him, and, for just that reason, they are the more easily impressed by the strange power in him—under such ignominy, dying in such majesty. Not so with his disciples. They had expected every thing of him, and now that he is dead, every expectation is blasted. Even their profound respect, unwilling as they are to shake it off, and tenderly as they would fain cling to it still, is yet a really blasted confidence, now that he is dead under such ignominy. The two senators, Nicodemus and Joseph, come with their spices, revealing what impressions they have felt of his wonderful character, and daring now to show their respect just because he is dead. Finally, on the third day morning, it is rumored among the disciples that he is risen, but their soul is under such a weight of stupor that they can not believe it. And two of them we find trudging back homeward to Galilee, sad, and heavy-hearted, and weeping, as it were, in doleful refrain—"We thought it had been he that should have redeemed Israel!"

Where now is the power? We have been exploring a large field, hunting down along the whole course of Christ's life, expecting, looking to see, the great name rolled up into volume and majesty, but that any thing we have found should have

The power is not yet.

power to new-create the moral sentiments and affinities of mankind, we can hardly believe. We have seen, between the infancy and the death, a great many strange things, and a great many lovely. Coruscations of glory have been shooting out, all along the remarkable history. But there have been severities, and repellences, and discouraging tokens, blended so continually with the story, and the end of it is so dark, if not weak, that we get no such densely compacted unity of impression, as belongs to a great moral power. We are put in a maze, or even a thrilling kind of mystery, but that all-the-while cumulative power and weight, that great name which is to be a gospel of life in men's hearts, does not appear. And yet there is, it may be, a certain latent heat in the facts we have noted, that is finally to become sensible heat, or blaze into splendor. No life becomes a power, till we somehow get the clue of it. A great many human characters are very much of a riddle, till they come on to the crisis of fact, where their objects, and ends, and secret aims, are all discovered, and where the seeming faults and contrarieties, that were mysterious, get their solution—all to be approved in the admirable and wise unity that could not sooner appear.

The resurrection is the crisis of his glory.

Christ only differs here from such mysterious, peculiar men, in the fact that he dies before the clue is given. It is only the resurrection and ascension back into glory, that bring us out the true point of understanding. Now his most extraordinary nature and mission, for the first time, come distinctly into thought. Now, since he

has gone up visibly into heaven, we begin to understand what he meant, when he said, that he came down from heaven. We conceive him as the incarnate Word, and begin to look upon his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. In him now there may be more than we saw, a greater name and power; for the righteousness and love of God are in him, and it puts a new face on his whole life, that he is here to save the world.

We begin back now at the point of his infancy and we follow him onward again, going over all the points we have named, but with results how different! Every thing falls into place, and every step onward is the unfolding of power. The wonderful authority becomes more wonderful; in the right of a superior nature to give it sanction, the severity becomes majesty; knowing who the teacher is, what before was truth brightens into a glorious wisdom; the soft-looking innocence of the life becomes a kind of general transfiguration; the agony, that seemed to be wanting in magnanimity, becomes the love-groan, as it were, of his mysterious nature; the crushing defeat of the death breaks into immortal victory. Whatever, in a word, seemed weak, distracted, contrarious, takes on a look of progressive order, and falls into chime, as a necessary factor in his divinely great character. And so the merely human beginning grows into what is more and more visibly superhuman, dying into boundlessness and glory, as the sun when it sets in the sea. The rising and the ascension put us on the revision, and helped us to conceive

who he was; but now he is so great that the rising does not raise him any more, and the ascension does not glorify him.

How revisions of character affect our impressions.

When we conceive the glorification of Christ, and the completion of his great name, as a revision or revised impression, to which we are incited by his resurrection and ascension, we are not without many illustrations. I send these sheets to the press, when our whole nation is dissolving, as it were, in its tears of mourning, for the great and true Father whom the assassins of law and liberty have sent on his way to the grave. What now do we see in him, but all that is wisest, and most faithful, and worthiest of his perilous magistracy. A halo rests upon his character, and we find no longer any thing to blame, scarcely any thing not to admire, in the measures and counsels of his gloriously upright, impartial, passionless, undiscourageable rule. But we did not always see him in that figure. When, already three full years of his time were gone by, many of us were doubtful whether most to blame or to praise, and many who most wanted to praise, had well nigh lost their confidence in him, and even retained their respect with difficulty. But the successes he deserved began, at last, to come, and the merit of his rule to appear. We only doubted still whether wholly to approve and praise. A certain grotesqueness and over-simplicity, in spite of all our favoring judgments, kept off still the just impression of his dignity, and suffered us to only half believe. But the tragic close of his life added a new element, and

brought on a second revision; setting him in a character only the more sublime, because it is original and quite unmatched in history. The great name now of Abraham Lincoln emerges complete, a power of blessing on mankind, and a bond of homage in the feeling of his country forever.

Shall we not see, in this humbler and yet striking example, how it is that moral power, even the moral power of Christ, emerges finally and is crowned, only when the necessary point of revision is reached? So it is that Christ begins to be known as "the wisdom of God and the power"—"the power of God unto salvation." This, too, is what an apostle means when he prays, that he may "know him, and the power of his resurrection." It is not the omnipotent power that raised him, which he longs to know, but the heart-power, the power of his great name and glory, which began to be discovered and conceived, when he rose from the dead. And the same exactly is true of another famous passage, if only we had time to make out the interpretation, where he says—"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

If then so great a power has been obtained by Christ, in the matter of his life, we shall expect, of course, to see it in effects on human life and character that correspond. And we have not far to go before we find them. A few weeks after, when the disciples are waiting to be endued with power from on high, even for the promised

The power is proved by its effects.

Spirit, who should take the things of Christ and show them unto men, convincing thus of sin, of righteousness, and a judgment to come, a new scene is suddenly opened in their assembly, by the arrival of the promise; whereupon the preaching of the great, hitherto unknown gospel is inaugurated as a power on the world. The cloud that was on Peter's mind is now taken away; his understanding is opened; and suddenly grasping the true meaning of his Master's life and death, as a gospel of salvation for men, he begins to preach it. He goes over the outline of his Lord's miracles and death, turning his discourse principally on the matter of the resurrection, and proclaiming him boldly, as the ascended king of the world. "Therefore being by the right of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." And then he turns directly down upon the consciences of the assembly all the tremendous guilt of their crime in his crucifixion. —"Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ."

The result was that thousands in the immense assembly, overwhelmed and utterly broken down, by the sense of their guilt, turned themselves, by faith, as the apostles exhorted, to the now ascended victim of their malice, for the remission of their sins. And how mightily are they changed! It is as if some irruption of heaven's love had broken into them; as it verily has, in the person of the just now hated and murdered Nazarene.

They appear to hardly know, as yet, what has befallen them. They are so happy in their dear, mysterious fellowship, that there are not hours enough in the day and the night for their enjoyment of it. The city converts sell their goods and possessions to feed the pilgrims on a longer stay, and they go on breaking bread, in open hospitality, from house to house, eating their meat with gladness, and praising God as they go.

This now is the power; first a convincing power, next a power of love begetting love—how great a power it is and is to be, we may perceive in these its first effects. By this power it was that the apostles and first Christians gained their rapid victories over the learning and philosophy, and finally the military empire of the heathen world. They went every where preaching Christ and his resurrection, testified every where the great name Jesus, saying—"there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."

The power increases still.

And this name is a greater power now than it was then, and has a greater hold of the world. It penetrates more and more visibly our sentiments, opinions, laws, sciences, inventions, modes of commerce, modes of society, advancing, as it were, by the slow, measured step of centuries, to a complete dominion over the race. So the power is working and so it will till it reigns. Not that Christ grows better, but that he is more and more competently apprehended, as he becomes more widely incarnated among men, and obtains a fitter representation to

thought, in the thoughts and works of his people. If in some particular century the gospel seems to suffer a wave of retrocession, it is only gathering power for an other great advance. Bad power dies, right power never. Prophecy, or no prophecy, such a Christ of God could not come into the world, without a certainty coming in his train, that all the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever.

Glorious affirmation of the power.

I can not better close this exposition, than by citing a single passage of Scripture, that contains and sums up all we have been trying to show, in the briefest and most pregnant testimony possible, every syllable of which deserves to be profoundly meditated by itself—"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The historical exposition of the moral power of Christ, or of the process by which it is obtained, is now

finished, and yet certain points of rational consequence remain to be suggested, which could not be crowded into the body of it, without creating an appearance of distraction. The view of Christ's mission, I have been trying to establish, excludes the possibility, it will be seen, of any dogmatic formula, in which it may be adequately stated. It is not a theorem, or form of thought, but a process, and the process includes all the facts of a life. It will also be seen how the apostle labors, in the passage just cited, even to condense an outline view of it into seven full verses of his epistle; in which also it is made sufficiently evident, that the Scriptures themselves do not know how to make up any formula of three or four lines, that will adequately express, in the manner of our theologians, the import of Christ's reconciling work. That work, accurately speaking, consisted in exactly the whole life of Jesus; all that he said and did, and, to human impression, was, in the conditions through which he passed. No such life was ever written even of a man. Not even the gospels themselves are any thing more than brief outline records. And one of the writers distinctly intimates the impossibility of a complete narrative, because it would make the record too cumbersome to have any value—the world itself would scarcely contain the books. How then can any formula, or brief summation of words, be imagined to fitly represent the meaning of the life-work of Christ, when that meaning is exactly the power obtained by the life, and can be represented only

No dogmatic statement possible.

by the facts, of which it is the character and expression.

Christ I just said is not a form of thought. He is no proposition. He is given, neither by nor to, logical definition. He is no quantitative matter, like a credit set in a book, or a punishment graduated by satisfaction. His reality is what he expresses, under laws of expression; the power, the great name, he thus obtains under forms of human conduct that make their address to reason, conviction, feeling, passion, sympathy, imagination, faith, and the receptivities generally of the moral nature. What rational person ever imagined that he could state, in a defined formula, the import of any great character; Moses, for example, Plato, Scipio, Washington. Hence the necessary poverty, and almost mockery, of all attempts to put the work of Christ in formula, or to dogmatize it in a proposition, or church article. The Iliad, or Paradise Lost could as well be formulized in that manner as his gospel. We can give the "Argument" of these, in so many headings for so many books; but the epic power will be wholly in the acts and incidents that fill the books, never in their "Argument." So we can say of Christ's work, and of the sublime art-mystery of his incarnate life, what is not absurd, what may even be of use—we do so when we call it God's method of obtaining power over fallen character—still it must be left us to feel, that just nothing of the power, that is of the whole living truth, is in the account we have given. Nothing we can say of

The reality of Christ is what he expresses.

the power will appear to have much power in it; for nothing raises the true sense of that power, but just what he did, taken just as he did it. The most that can be hoped is, that, by what of dissertation we may indulge, the sense of his work and the facts by which his power is obtained, may be unlocked more easily.

In this manner, four points, in particular, may yet be made, in regard to the process and effect of his life, that will render the power of it still more intelligible, and, so far, more impressive.

1. That the kind of moral power obtained by Christ is different from any which had been obtained by men, more difficult, deeper, and holier. He founds no school of philosophy, heads no revolution, fights no great battle, achieves no title to honor, such as the world's great men have achieved. Men consciously feel, that a strong power is somehow gathering about his person, but will only know, by and by, what it is. It is the power, in great part, of sorrow, suffering, sacrifice, death; a paradox of ignominy and grandeur not easily solved. Honor, in the common sense of that term, can make nothing of it. Fame will not lift her airy trumpet, to publish it, and would only mock it if she did. If we call him a hero, as some are trying to do, then all other heroes appear to be scarcely more than mock heroes in the comparison.

No similar power among men.

There is no wrong or impropriety in calling Christ a hero, if we do not assume that, having found him in the category of heroes, we have thus accounted for his won-

derful eminence, on the ground of his mere natural manhood. I believe that I have once or twice spoken, casually, of the heroic element in his life; and I have hesitated much, whether I should not present him more deliberately in this figure. The only reason why I should not is that, regarding him as the manifestation, or demonstration, of God, the honor I should claim for him might only seem to put him below the scale of divinity and not in it. And yet, in as far as he ranges in the scale, or under the conditions, of humanity, obtaining a name and a power under such conditions, it is even a gloriously divine token for him, that he so visibly, remarkably, immeasurably, transcends all known examples of heroism. Besides there is a very important matter to be gained by such a conception of his character. We conceive him in the travail of his suffering life and sacrifice, we magnify his tenderness and patience and submission to the cross, we call him the Lamb that is offered for our sin, and pressing wholly on this side of passivity, we are in no small danger of enfeebling the moral power he is obtaining by his life. Accordingly, to right the conception we get by such overdoing of his passive and submissive virtue, there is needed also some just reference to the energetic, and positive, and really grand heroism of his mission. For really there is nothing, in all the heroic characters, whether of history, or fiction, at all comparable to the sublime figure he maintains, in his very humble, or, as we might even say, dejected ministry.

In what sense Christ was a hero.

He plainly does not think himself that he is in the passive key, even when he suffers most; but he calmly asserts the power he has to keep his life unharmed against all enemies—"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again." Nothing compels him to die, but the grandly heroic motive supplied by his love to his enemies. All true martyrs we conceive to be God's heroes; but what martyr ever bore witness to the truth, whose death had not some reference to the original, transcendent martyrdom of the Son of God? Heroes throw their life upon their cause, by inspiration from it; he had meat and drink and home for his houseless body, in the work he had taken upon him, and knowing that he must die for his cause, he could say "how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Heroes are men who go above all the low resentments; he could even pray the prayer of pity and apology for his enemies, when dying under their hands. Great souls are not flurried and disconcerted by the irruption of great dangers; behold the solid majesty of this man's silence, this provincial man, this country mechanic, when so many fierce accusations, by so many fierce conspirators in high life, are hurled against him. Heroes that die, and bear themselves nobly in the terrible hour of their conflict, are commonly caught without much warning, and are fortified by the tremendous excitement of the hour; Christ was facing death for at least three whole years, and waiting for his time to come; yet never weakened, or swerved, by the doom that he knew to be on

him, but comforting his great mind constantly in the hope that, when he should be lifted up, he would draw all men to him. The great causes of heroes are commonly under the eye, and are more or less computable in their time; but Christ, the poor rustic of Nazareth, undertakes a cause and kingdom that comprehend the world, and require a run of time outreaching all definite computation, and shows not half the misgivings of the great heroes of the world, who expect their triumph and perhaps their meed of fame, within a few short years.. There was never, we may safely say, any such instance of self-devotion among men, never so little of heat or excitement, never such firmness coupled with such tenderness and gentleness, never such oblivion of popularity, never such incapacity to be humbled by ignominy. So that if we speak of heroes, we are tempted either to say that he is no hero at all, or else the only hero. And here it is that the moral power we have seen him obtaining culminates. In this fact, the almost feminine passivity we are likely to figure as the total account of his character, reveals the mighty underwork and robust vigor of a really immortal confidence and tenacity. The moral power he obtains, in a character of such transcendent heroism, corresponds. We make no true account of it, till we take it as the supernatural flowering on earth, of a glory that he had before the world was.

The example most nearly correspondent, among men is that of Socrates, and yet the superficial, almost flashy merit of his power, heroic as he certainly was, is about

the most striking result of a just comparison. There had been different opinions about Socrates before, and many scholars even now do not hesitate to speak lightly of his coarse manners, and the general lightness and rudeness of his character. Be the truth what it may, in regard to these matters, there was certainly a remarkable dignity, and even sublimity in his death. Arraigned and sentenced to death unjustly, for a mere political offense, he refused, as a philosopher and good citizen, to save his life by an escape that would make him a violator of the laws of his country; and the Athenian people had been sufficiently exercised in political matters to appreciate the merit of such a sacrifice. A great popular reaction immediately followed, that overwhelmed his accusers, and made his name, forever after, one of the great powers of the world. A merely casual reaction followed the death of Christ, in the same manner, but it came to no practical issue, just because the sacrifice he made of his life was too deep in its heroic meaning to be practically valued, and too profoundly accusatory to awaken sympathy. He died for no ends of patriotic devotion, or even of moral reformation, as regards the social wrongs and destructive vices of the world, but for the state of sin itself and the recovery of souls to God—just that kind of benefaction which only a very few of mankind, such as Plato, for example, and like meditative teachers here and there, had once thought of as a want, or could even begin to conceive. To such a kind of sacrifice the

Socrates the nearest human example.

world itself was a dead receptivity, and it was to be the glory of his power, that he could open a receptivity where there was none; that he could stir the consciousness of lost men deeply enough to make the state of sin a dread reality, and the want of reconciliation to God the prime necessity of their being. And just here lies the wonder of his power; that he opens such a sense of the holy and of men's relations to a holy God, as to make his own public, where there was none, and create the very homage by which he is to be received; raising nature up to ask the supernatural, and join herself to it, in a faith that goes above all of this world's honors, homages, and applauses.

2. It is a very great point, as regards the kind of power, Christ is obtaining, that he humanizes God to men. I have already spoken of the necessary distance and coldness of a mere attribute power, such as we ourselves generate, when trying to think God as the Absolute Being. The incarnate life and history of Jesus meet us here, at the point of our weakness. God is in Christ, consenting to obtain the power, by which he will regain us to himself, under our own human conditions. He is in our plane, acting with us and for us, interpreted to our sympathies by what he does and is, in social relationship with us. His perfections meet us in our own measures, not in the impossible measures of infinity; and so he becomes a world-king in the world, and not above it and far away from it. We know him, in just the same way as we know one another. He becomes the

God humanized to us.

great Head Character in human history, by living in it Himself—such a kind of power, as being once in it, can never be gotten out of it, any more than if it were a new diffusive element in the world's atmosphere. God is no more a theosophy, or mere phosphorescence of our human intelligence; no more a theophany, like those casual appearances of the Jehovah Angel in the old dispensation—all which left him a God more separate, in a sense, than before, as any such unveiling by mere phantasm must—but a God-human or God-man, born into our race itself, and even into a place in our human tables of genealogy. And since we are so deep in the senses, he contrives to meet us there, that we may hear, see with our eyes, look upon, handle him with our hands. Nay, he comes directly into our bodies themselves, by the healing of his inward touch, and occupies a great part of his ministry in works that take hold of our sympathy, by means of our diseases. No greater advance on human sensibility, we may fairly say, could possibly be made, than is in fact made, in this wonderful chapter of humanization, that contains the teachings, healings, tender condescensions, and sufferings, of the divine man Jesus. He builds up anew, so to speak, and before our eyes, in the open facts of his ministry, the divine perfections themselves, and the moral power he obtains in doing it is just what it must be; a name that is above every name.

3. It is another great article of his power, that he is able to raise, at once, the sense of guilt and attract the confidence of the guilty. By his purity of life, by the

sublime reach of his very simple doctrine, by his terrible warnings and reproofs, by his persistent coupling of disease, in all his healings, with sin, by the sorrows and the suffering patience of his life, by the bitter ignominy of his death, followed by the Spirit coming after his resurrection, to show the things of his life to men in their true light of meaning—by all these piercing demonstrations he stirs the conviction of guilt, as never it was stirred before, and yet with no such consequences of revulsion from God, as belongs to the natural action of guilt. The feeling of guilt, under mere natural conviction, is a feeling of recoil. The instinctive language of it is—"I was afraid and hid myself." It shoves the soul off from God and then it pictures God as being withdrawn from it. A certain chill is felt when he is thought of, and the soul shivers in cold dread of his purity. But the incarnate Saviour, taking his place with us in our bad level, after the manner just described, stops the natural recoil of our guilt, and marries even our self-condemnation to confidence. Great as our guilt is, Christ, we see, can be our sponsor for all the wrong and damage of it. As the guilt kept him not away from us, so it shall not keep us away from him. Nay as it even drew him after us, shall it not also draw us after him? True we have sinned, our sin is upon us, and not even his forgiveness can ever annihilate the fact of our sin; but if he has come over it all to be the righteousness of God upon us, may we not come away from it, and be the righteousness of God in

He both wakens guilt and draws confidence.

him? And so when the tough and sturdy fact of our guilt would thrust us quite away from God, Christ so far reverses every thing with us by the wonderful power of his ministry, that our guilt is even made to be the argument that draws us, and, as it were, fastens our confidence. It would almost seem to be a miracle, and yet the result is only a simple incident of that great moral power, by which he is able to reverse every thing in the fallen condition of our sin. We come now—

4. To another and last point, where the moral power obtained by Christ gets even its principal weight of impression; viz., to the fact made evident, by his vicarious sacrifice, that God suffers on account of evil, or with and for created beings under evil—a fact very commonly disallowed and rejected, I am sorry to add, even by Christian theology itself, as being rationally irreconcilable with God's greatness and sufficiency.

The culminating fact is God's affliction for sin.

It was very natural that the coarse, crude mind of the world, blunted to greater coarseness and crudity by the chill of guilt in its feeling, should be overmuch occupied in conceiving God's infinity and the merely dynamic energies and magnitudes of his nature; the sovereignty of his will, his omnipotent force, his necessary impassibility to force external to himself, his essential beatitude as excluding all inflictions of pain or loss. Hence it has been very generally held, even to this day, as a matter of necessary inference, that God is superior in every sense, to suffering. Our theologians are com-

monly shocked, as by some frightful word of derogation, when the contrary is affirmed, and when they come to the matter of Christ's suffering, they are careful to show, regarding it as a necessary point of reverence, that it was only the human nature that suffered, not the divine, suffering in itself. Besides, it will even be admitted, perhaps unwittingly, by those who dare to obtrude in this manner upon the interior mystery of Christ's person, where all reasonings about the physical suffering must be at fault, that even God himself, as well out of Christ as in the incarnate person of Christ, does incur a profoundly real suffering—not physical suffering, as I now speak, yet a suffering more deep than any physical suffering can be.

God's perfections even require him to suffer.

The principal suffering of any really great being and especially of God is because of his moral sensibility, nay, because of his moral perfection. He would not be perfect, if he did not feel appropriately to what is bad, base, wrong, destructive, cruel, and to every thing opposite to perfection. If the sight of wrong were to meet the discovery of God, only as a disgusting spectacle meets a glass eye, his perfection would be the perfection of a glass eye and nothing more. None of us conceive him in this manner, but we conceive him as having a right sensibility to every thing. We say that he is displeased, and what is displeasure but an experience opposite to pleasure? so far a kind of suffering. We say that he "loathes" all baseness and impurity, and what is closer to a pain than loathing? We say that he "hates"

all unrighteousness, and what is hatred but a fire of suffering? Is he not a "long-suffering" God, and is there no suffering in long-suffering? Is he not a patient God, and what is patience but a regulated suffering? So of compassion, pity, sympathy, indignations suppressed, wounds of ingratitude, bonds of faith violated by treachery. So far we all admit the fact of divine suffering, no matter how sturdily we deny it in theory. The suffering is moral suffering it is true, but it is the greatest and most real suffering in the world—so great that a perfect being would be likely, under it, to quite forget physical suffering, even if it were upon him. Making then so vast an admission, what does it signify, afterward, to turn ourselves round, in what we conceive to be our logical sagacity, and raise the petty inference that God, being infinite, must be impassible!

God's beatitude not diminished by the suffering of his love.

But we must not omit, in this connection, to notice a fact, as regards the moral suffering of God, that is not commonly admitted, or even observed, like the others just referred to. Thus we conceive, that God is a being whose moral nature is pervaded and characteered, all through, by love. Some teachers even go so far as to insist that the Scripture declaration—"God is love"—is no rhetorical figure, but a logical and literal teaching; that God's very substance, or essence, is love. And yet love is an element, or principle, whether substance or not, so essentially vicarious, that it even mortgages the subject to suffering, in all cases where there is no ground of complacency.

As certainly as God is love, the burdens of love must be upon him. He must bear the lot of his enemies, and even the wrongs of his enemies. In pity, in patience, in sacrifice, in all kinds of holy concern, he must take them on his heart, and be afflicted for them as well as by them. In his greatness there is no bar to this kind of suffering; he will suffer because he is great, and be great because he suffers. Neither is his everlasting beatitude any bar to his suffering; for there is nothing so essentially blessed as to suffer well. Moral greatness culminates in great and good suffering; culminates also in blessedness, for there is a law of compensation in all moral natures, human as well as divine, divine as well as human, by which their suffering for love's sake becomes always a transcendent and more consciously sovereign joy. There ought to be no incredible paradox in this; for it is a fact every day proved—always to be known by mortal experience.

Now it is this moral suffering of God, the very fact which our human thinking is so slow to receive, that Christ unfolds and works into a character and a power, in his human life. His compassions burdened for guilty men, his patient sensibilities, sorrows, sacrifices, the intense fellow-feeling of his ministry, his rejected sympathies, wrongs, ignominies—under and by all these it is that he verifies, and builds into a character, the moral suffering of the divine love.

Christ's moral power consummated in the agony and the cross.

Hence what is called the agony, which gives, in a sense, the key-note of his ministry; because it is pure

moral suffering; the suffering, that is, of a burdened love and of a holy and pure sensibility, on which the hell of the world's curse and retributive madness is just about to burst. There is here no physical suffering, save what results from his moral and mental suffering. There is no fear; for, to human appearance, there is nothing as yet to fear; and, besides, the pathology of the suffering is exactly opposite to that of fear; in which the blood flies the skin, retreating on the heart, instead of being forced outward and exuding from it. There is, too, no appearance of panic in the sufferer's action, and he expresses, no doubt truly, what he feels when he says, that his "soul is exceeding sorrowful." We discover, also, at several distinct points in his ministry before, that he is under a tendency to just this kind of agony; as when he groans in Spirit, declares that his soul is troubled, spends whole nights in prayer. It is as if there were a load upon his sensibility which his mere human organization could with difficulty support. And accordingly, now that his active labors are ended, and his feeling is no longer diverted and drawn off by occupation, now that he has made his farewell discourse, offered his parting prayer, instituted his supper of communion, the surge of burdened sensibility rolls in upon him all too heavily to be sustained. And this is the agony. It is just what such a nature, made the vehicle of such feeling, facing such a juncture, ought to suffer and could not, humanly speaking, avoid. It is the moral pain of his love, sharpened by the crisis of his love; and, and a bloody sweat is wrung from his

too frail body, by the overload of divine feeling struggling under it.

In his cross there is also a physical suffering, of which something is made by the Scriptures, and a great deal more by theology; for multitudes conceive that this physical suffering is the pain God takes for satisfaction, when he releases the pains that are due under the just liabilities of sin. I will not undertake to solve the mystery of these physical pains; for it must be admitted that God is a being physically impassible. But it is something to observe that there is nothing peculiar in them, as distinct from the mystery of the incarnation. God is not finite, or subject, any more than he is passible, and yet he is, in some sense, uninvestigable by us, both finite and subject. Enough for us, as regards the subject state of Christ, that he is able to express so much of the glory of the Father. So of the pains or physical sufferings. Their importance to us lies probably, not in what they are, but in what they express, or morally signify. They are the symbol of God's moral suffering. The moral tragedy of the garden is supplemented by the physical tragedy of the cross; where Jesus, by not shrinking from so great bodily pains, which the coarse and sensuous mind of the world will more easily appreciate, shows the moral suffering of God for sinners more affectingly, because he does it in the lower plane of natural sensibility. And yet even the suffering of the cross appears to be principally moral suffering; for the struggle and tension of his feeling is so great that he dies, it is discovered,

long before the two others crucified with him, and sooner than, by mere natural torment, was to be expected.

But there is a much harsher and sharper meaning frequently given to the agony and the cross, as if Jesus were in the lot of sin a great deal more literally than I have conceived him to be, and God were giving him a cup of judicial anger to drink, from which his soul recoils. This conception is supposed to be specially justified by his exclamation from the cross—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me;" where it is imagined that God is dealing with him in severity, hiding his face behind a cloud of ire, and leaving him to bear the penal woe of transgression; or, if not this, so far withdrawing from him as to drape the scene of his death in a felt darkness of soul, that shall somehow express the divine abhorrence to sin. The assumption, whether in one form or the other, appears to be gratuitous. That the soul of Jesus, just reeling into death, should utter such a cry was most natural, and it should be printed with a point of exclamation, as being a cry of distress, not with a point of interrogation, as if he were raising a question of remonstrance about a matter of fact. When will theologic dogmatism understand the language of passion? Besides an angel is sent to him in his agony to strengthen him—an angel sent to support him in the desertion of God? Does he not also protest that he can have twelve legions of angels to help him, by simply asking for them? And in what does he close the scene of his suffering, just after his

Nothing penal in the agony and the cross.

bitter cry on the cross, but in these most open, trustful words of confidence—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." It is hardly necessary to say that this hard and revolting conception of the agony and the cross has a purely theologic origin. At no other two points, in the ministry of Jesus, would the eternal Father have testified with a warmer approbation or a sympathy more close—"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Nay, the Father did, in fact, give just this testimony for him beforehand, in this article of his suffering; for when he was speaking of his death now at hand, and his soul was troubled, falling into a kind of incipient agony, how does he quell his feeling but in the petition, "Father, glorify thy name;" whereupon there comes a voice from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." Comforted by such a testimony, and daring, in his last prayer, to say—"I have glorified thee on the earth," will it be imagined that God, beholding such an accession of glory in his death, is even hiding from him still, when the last hour comes, in grim displeasure?

Here then it is, in the revelation of a suffering God, that the great name of Jesus becomes the embodied glory and the Great Moral Power of God. In it, as in a sun, the divine feeling henceforth shines; so that whoever believes in his name takes the power of it, and is transformed radically, even at the deepest center of life, by it—born of God.

PART III.

THE RELATIONS OF GOD'S LAW AND JUSTICE TO HIS SAVING WORK IN CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

THE LAW BEFORE GOVERNMENT.

THUS far we have been ranging in a field, we may almost say, unobstructed by matters of difficulty and debate; we have reached, in fact, the middle of our journey, and have encountered none of the great battle points of the champions, but have only seen the smoke from afar. We seem, indeed, to have been occupied only in such kind of exploration, as could well be made for the benefit of it, and to simply bathe our feeling in that love which God has revealed in his Son. But we are now, at last, come to the borders of the Amalekites, where there is no way to get a passage, but to make one. All the questions that have troubled others are in our path also, from this point onward—questions of law, penalty, justice, righteousness, and their connections with mercy, forgiveness, and the justification of life.

A suspicion is often suggested, by those who are looking after the truth among these difficulties, that there must be some hidden ambiguity, or confusion of meaning, in the words here employed. What is said of law and justice, under the analogies of human government does not appear to

The political analogies suspected.

hold, without qualifications not given. It can not be that such analogies of law, and justice, and penalty, and pardon, prepared in the civil state, are not to be used in religion. Like all other analogies of the outward life, they were designed to be. And yet there are few close observers, I suspect, who have not sometimes been so far impressed, by the fatalities discovered in attempts to resolve Christ's work under this kind of analogy, as to seriously doubt whether any thing reliable can be thus accomplished. There certainly can not be, unless the analogy is carefully qualified by others, such for example as those of the family, the field, the shop, the market. There is also another kind of qualifier, that is obtained by getting a partially distinct footing for the subject, in a province of thought which is not under such analogies.

And it is in this view that I now propose a distinction, which, as far as it goes, takes the subject quite away from all the governmental figures, allowing us to speak, or to reason of law and justification, without being dominated by such figures—the distinction, I mean, between law before government, and law by government; uninstituted, necessary law, and law enacted and supported by instituted government. If I am successful in the statement and development of this distinction, a considerable part of the confusion which has been felt, in these much debated matters of atonement, will, I think, disappear.

It is very obvious to any thoughtful person, that, in order of reason, whatever may be true as respects order

in time, there was law before God's will, and before his instituting act; viz., that necessary, everlasting, ideal, law of RIGHT, which, simply to think, is to be forever obliged by it. The perfections of God, being self-existent and eternal, were eternally squared by this self-existent law; for, if they had any moral quality, it lay in their conformity to some moral law, apart from which no such perfection is conceivable. Otherwise, if God's perfections came forth only after and out of his will, and after the institution of his government, then he began to will and to institute government, without any perfections, and even without any moral standard—becoming all righteousness, and commanding all right, before even the ideal law of right had arrived.

The law before God's will.

The grand, primal fact then is, that God's own nature was in law, or crystallizing in eternal obligation, before he became a lawgiver, and that he became a lawgiver only because he was already in the power of law. Not that he was in obligation to any governing force above him, or back of him; for he was himself the only being, and the container of all forces to be. The law was ideal, and not governmental, a simple thought, which to think was to be in everlasting, necessary, obligation to it. There was no command upon God, no penalty hovered by to threaten; but, thinking *right*, His whole nature answered in sublime, self-prompted, allegiance. And this allegiance to an idea, viz., *right*, was his righteousness—the sum of all his perfections, and the root and spring, in that manner, of all he governs for, or by instituted government maintains.

How it is with him, in this law before government, we shall find by a simple reference to ourselves, and the methods of our own moral nature; for we exist in his image. I think of space, for example, and this eternal, necessary idea of space goes with me, compelling me to see all outward extensions, or distances in it. I think of cause, and this necessary idea compels me, or qualifies me, to see all goings on of change, under terms of causation. These ideas are, in fact, forms of the mind; forms to which it adverts in all thinking, and without which it could not think at all. The same is true of the ideas of time, and number, and quantity. Being in the form of time, I am put on thinking when; of number, on thinking how many; of quantity, on thinking how much. So I think of truth, in general idea, and having that form of thought developed, I begin to think what particular things are true. In the same way is developed the grand, all-regulative, Moral Idea of Right; which to simply think, is to be put in everlasting obligation. For it is the distinction of this idea, that it is the Monarch Principle of the soul. It puts all moral natures under an immediate, indefeasible bond of sovereignty. They become moral natures because they are set before this idea of right. Animals think no such thought, and are never set before this idea. They probably have the ideas of space, and cause, and number, but right is of a higher range; else if they could think it, they would be moral natures in common with us.

Conception of the law absolute.

Here then, as being simply existent with a moral na-

ture, and without being commanded, or before, we are put in a state of fixed obligation. It matters not whether we know of a God; for, if we do, we are none the more truly under law after his commandment comes than before—though we may be more effectively under it. The simple idea of right, if we accept the authority of it, and set ourselves to it for a total homage and conformity, will be a complete regulation for the life—for every thought, and act, and disposition—and will fashion us in a completely harmonic character and state of righteousness. It only can not do this after we have fallen away from it, and been thrown out of spiritual order, by the shock of our disobedience. Then it will even require a salvation to restore us.

Let us not forget, or overlook, at this point, the distinction between the eternal, one idea which contains all law, as regards the principle—being a simple, universal, always present, never doubtful idea—and those questions of right or wrong, so called, which relate to particular actions. Here we have abundance of doubt, and debate, and perplexed casuistry, bringing us here to one conclusion, here to another, and sometimes to none at all. To settle these questions we make appeal to custom, to Scripture usage and precept, to what is useful, to what is beautiful, setting our critical judgments at work, and our memory, and our tastes, and mental associations. But these subordinate and particular questions of duty are only executory, it will be observed, as regards the general principle, and it mat-

Applications doubtful, the law, never.

ters little if we mistake, or differ in these, doing it honestly, provided only we are trying to enthrone the Monarch Principle and put every thing in allegiance under it. Meantime, in this law of laws, we all agree without a shade of difference. It is the same to one human creature, in one part of the world, as to any and every other, in parts most remote; the same to the Gentile as to the Jew, to the heathen as to the Christian. Nay, it is the same to created souls in all orders, as to God uncreated, and the same to God as to them.

There is then a law before government, which is common to all moral natures, and in which all moral distinctions have their root. It is, in fact, the law of the conscience; for though it is common to speak of the conscience as a throne of government inserted by the creative and constructive purpose of God, it does not appear to be true that God ever contrived a conscience, in any other sense than that he has appointed a moral nature for us, in distinction from one that is not. The conscience of God is only the fact itself of his moral nature, and our conscience is but the fact of our kinship with him, in the central idea that contains the mold and law of his perfections. If we use the term conscience to cover the ground, not merely of that central idea, but of all particular actions under it, the conscience would, in that case, be a really infallible oracle for infinite questions in us, apart from all helps of judgment and discriminations of reason; only it is plain as need be, and can not well escape our discovery, that we certainly have no such oracle in us; for if we

have it, whence come so many unsolved questions and debates of duty?

On this point of a law before government, and a conscience that enthrones it, we require no better exposition than that which is given by the apostle, when he declares,* that as many as commit sin without law, [instituted law] shall also perish without the same; and that only such as sin against instituted law will be judged by it; for, though they have it not, they are yet a law [uninstituted] to themselves, their conscience bearing witness before all commandment, and apart from all administrative enforcement. What he means to say is, that their moral nature itself answers, with inevitable conviction, to the eternal, necessary principle of right; placing them, so far, in a condition where they are a law to themselves, and would be forever, if no rule, or judgment, or judge from without, should appear, to authenticate, or vindicate, the obligation they feel.

The Law Absolute supposed to rule for a time by itself.

Let us now conceive it possible, that God and all moral natures exist, for a time, under this ideal, necessary law, or law of laws, having no other; that government is not yet undertaken, God having not come forth as yet, to be the maintainer of this law, or to assume it as the charge of his voluntary administration. The moral natures, in this view, simply exist upon a common footing of necessary obligation—bound, all alike and together, as a matter of inmost conviction,

* Rom. ii, 12–15.

to do and be only right. I do not say, it will be observed, that the law moral had ever any such precedence of time, or any but a precedence of order, before the fact of government assumed. Still it can do no harm to raise the supposition of such precedence in time, if we are careful enough to use it only as a means of distinguishing certain points, in the great subject we have in discussion, that could not be as well distinguished in any other way.

Obedience makes complete society.

Having thus all moral natures upon this common footing of ideal, necessary law, and no personal authority, or will-force embarked, as yet, in the purpose to govern for it and be its vindicator, one of two things will be the result; either that the grand impersonal law will be accepted and obeyed, or else that it will not. God, we know, will receive it in everlasting honor; for exactly that he has done from eternity; and his being thus united to the right, fixedly and totally, is his righteousness—the sum, in that manner, of all his perfections. If created minds and orders cleave also to right, in the same way, they will be instated also in the same righteousness, and so in the same perfections with God. All moral beings, united thus in their homages to right, will be united also in love; love to each other, and love to the law, by which they are set in society and everlasting chime together, as in ways of mutual right-doing. Indeed the necessary and absolute law of right, thus accepted, is very nearly answered by the relational law of love; so that any realm of being, compacted in

right, will as certainly be unified in love, doing and suffering, each for each, just what the most self-immolating, dearest love requires. Even God, in such right-doing, will bend himself to any most expensive, lowest burden of sympathy, for the benefit and well-being of such as are humblest in the order of their dignity. The humblest in order, too, will as certainly magnify and worship the Infinite Right-Doer, because there is proportion in their sense of right—inspiring a homage that looks up in the lowliest, as truly as a way of sacrifice that looks down in the highest. In this manner the perfect, universal righteousness will organize a state of everlasting order and good fellowship, whose ideal we name, in the words, Complete Society.

Consequences if any disobey.

But there is another alternative: some one or more of these races of moral natures, in the state of impersonal law we have described, may throw off the law, and break loose in a condition of unsubjection; and here it becomes a very important matter, as regards the great questions we have now in hand, to note the consequences that will follow, and the new kinds of work and office that will be undertaken.

First of all, the internal state of the disobedient race, or races of moral natures, will be immensely changed. As certainly as they are broken loose from right, they will be chafing in the bitter consciousness of wrong, doing wrong to each other, feeling wrong, contriving wrong, writhing in the pains of wrong. Their whole internal state will be under a nimbus of confusion. For though nothing is contrived in them and the world to

have a retributive reaction, their simply being moral natures will compel them to suffer a tremendous shock of recoil. There will be a terrible disjunction of order in their parts and powers; so that what they call their soul will be scarcely better than a wrangle of contrarieties, or cage of growling antipathies. As to any self-restoration that will be effective, it is quite impossible. A flock of birds let fly could much less easily be gathered back from all the remotest points of heaven. For the internal confusion is so complex and wild—so nearly infinite—that no power of thought can conceive it, or how it should be set in the recomposition needed; no power of self-exertion accomplish the recomposition, if it were conceived. The whole moral nature, in short, is so far abused and suffers a recoil so dreadful, in the rejection of its law, that consciousness itself becomes a mordant element, with no power left to master the self-corrosive sublimation of its wrong. Not that in this fall, or self-undoing, it suffers any thing which is called justice, under the political analogies. We do not know that it suffers any thing in the scale of desert, which is the common notion of justice; we only know that it receives a shock of necessary pain, or disorder, from the violation of an immutable idea, that belongs inherently to its moral nature. If necessity does not know how to think, or any way get up a scale of justice, then it is *quasi* justice, and we probably can not say more —only the necessity of it is too absolute to be avoided. We may even dare to say, with all profoundest reverence to God, that if He, the All-Holy, were to cast off

Right—the law before government—in the case supposed, his wrong would be an earthquake shock, strong enough to shiver the integrity of his mold, and leave him a wreck of eternal incapacity, as respects both wholeness of being and a recovered harmony in good. This, not because there is any ordinance of justice above him, but that such is right, and such his moral nature, as related thereto —both self-existent—that, without regard to justice, the crystal must so break, by its own necessary law, and so He must irrecoverably fall. Thus, too, any race of finite moral creatures, falling irrecoverably in the same way, would be not less fearfully undone; not by justice, but only by the inevitable recoil of their offended moral nature.

Secondly, as another sad consequence, the law so much loved by all the obedient natures, including God, is diminished in its honor, desecrated, trampled, and mocked, and their minds are filled with deepest concern for it. It is as if the very law of their own beatitude were dying under its wounds. Asserting itself unhelped, and vindicated by no force but its own, it seems to be even going down, or vanishing away.

God will institute government and redemption together.

These two painful and disastrous consequences having arrived under the law before government; viz., the fall of multitudes beyond any power of self-redemption; and the law itself trampled in dishonor: is there any thing that God will certainly undertake? His infinite righteousness contains the answer; for by that he is ever-

lastingly fastened, in profoundest homage, to the law, and about as certainly to the well-being of all moral natures related, with Himself, to the law. He will therefore regard himself as elected, by his own transcendent powers of will and working, to assume the charge of a Ruler, and will institute government; contriving by what assertions of authority, supported by what measures, he may reinforce the impersonal law, and repair its broken sway. To this end he will organize a complete frame of statutes, and penalties, and motivities general, for the will, such as He, the Infinite Lord, and Head Power of the worlds, may count worthy of his wisdom and universal sovereignty—the same combination, we may well enough suppose, that we have to admire in his word and Providential order now. In this manner, or in some other closely related, we shall see that He has taken the government upon his shoulder.

Nor is it a matter very widely different, that he will undertake the redemption, or restoration, of the fallen race, or races; for he can hardly do for the law broken down all that he would, without recovering the disobedient to their full homage and allegiance. Besides, they are fellow-natures with Himself, and the righteous love he bears them will unite him to their fallen state, in acts of tenderest sacrifice. And so the instituted government and the redeeming sacrifice will begin together, at the same date and point, and work together, for very nearly the same purpose. In the largest and most proper view, the instituted government will include re-

demption; for, beginning at the point of transgression, already broken loose, mere legislative and judicial action, plainly enough, can not bring in the desired state of obedience. Legislation wants redemption for its coadjutor, and only through the divine sacrifice, thus ministered, can it ever hope to consummate the proposed obedience. Redemption also wants legislation, to back its tender appeals of sacrifice, by the stern rigors of law. Both together will compose the state of complete government. We are brought out thus by our supposition, upon the conception of a redeeming work, undertaken, or that would be undertaken, for and before the ideal law of right, and apart from any conditions of government, previously instituted, or violated. Precisely how, or by what plan, the restoring agency will operate, we, of course, do not know. Doubtless it will involve the grand, principal fact, that God is in vicarious sacrifice; and, if that is best, he will go forward in just the same ways of sacrifice, and the same revelations of love, that he has made in the suffering life and death of Christ. For since he is grounded, as respects all his perfections, in the eternal law of right now cloven down, he will love the principle itself, and love its adherents, and love, for the law's sake, as well as for their own, all the transgressors and enemies who may haply be recovered to it. And so we shall have on foot a grand work of redemptive sacrifice, that has no reference whatever to claims of justice previously incurred. The problem can not, therefore, be to satisfy or pacify justice, but simply to recompose in the vio-

lated law the shattered, broken souls, who have thrown down both themselves and it, by their disobedience.

A beginning will probably be made much like that of the Christian history, in the establishment of sacrifices, the sending of prophets, the strong discipline of Providential judgments, the long drilling and milling times of observances, defeats, and captivities. And then, when the fullness of time is come, we may look for an act of incarnation, provided any thing can be so accomplished; for the love of God will bring him down to the fallen, and a life in the flesh among them, just as it has done in Christ. He will come in the very spirit of the law rejected, and they will see, in him, how good and beautiful it is, and what burdens of suffering it will put upon him to bear for their benefit. I am not authorized to say that, in the peculiar case supposed, he will do just every thing which he has done by Christ and his cross, I only say that he will shrink from no sacrifice, or sorrow, or cross, that he may regain the erring ones to their law, and have them re-established in everlasting righteousness. And there appears to be no reason for doubting, that he will go through a historic chapter of vicarious sacrifice, closely correspondent with that which is transacted in Christ.

Thus far onward we are brought, in the lead of a supposition. Let me not be understood as resting any thing on the deductions made, beyond what the certain fact of a law before government will justify. There is really no such precedence in time, but only a prece-

dence of rational order. Instituted government is, to all created subjects of God, as old as ideal principle, and they never had a moment under this, before coming under the other. My whole object in tracing this supposed precedence of time, has been simply to get certain distinctions of idea unfolded, that will serve the future uses of my argument. The supposition is a fiction, the distinctions are profoundly real and important—allowing us to get a footing for the subject, where it will be less oppressively dominated, by the merely political, or judicial analogies.

Conceptions legitimated.

The distinctions of idea referred to are such as these; which any one will see to be legitimated in the exposition now traced—legitimated, that is, as conceptions, though not established as existing facts.

1. That there might be a scheme of cross, and sacrifice, and restoring power, every way like that which is executed in Christ, which has nothing to do with justice proper; being related only to that *quasi* justice which is the blind effect, in moral natures, of a violation of their necessary law.

2. That instituted law is no necessary precondition of redemption.

3. That the righteousness of God is not by any means identical with his justice, but includes all the perfections of God in his relation to the law before government, and never requires him to execute justice under political analogies, save as it first requires him to institute an administrative government in the same.

4. That law and justice might be instituted as co-factors of redemption, having it for their object to simply work with redemption, and serve the same ends of spiritual renovation—if there was a prior fall, under the law before government, they naturally would be.

5. That justification need not have any reference to God's justice, and probably has not, but only to a reconnection, by faith, with the righteousness of God, and a consciously new confidence, in the sense of that connection.

How related to the story of the Fall.

It will probably have occurred to some readers, in conjunction with what has here been said of the law before government, to inquire how far, and in what manner, it coincides with the Scripture representation of the original trial-state of man? Here, to the human race at least begins the instituted government of God. It comes in as no after-thought, to supplement the insufficiency of an ideal law which is older. In the breathing of the first breath, this also arrives, and the living soul is not complete in its moral equipment, sooner than it is put in authority by God's paternal keeping and commandment. Still it will be more convenient and rational, not to regard the fall as literally beginning at the breach of a merely instituted, almost arbitrary, apparently trivial statute, such as by the common understanding we have in the statute of the tree, but to regard the real breach as beginning at the everlasting law-principle hid in that statute, and violated in the violation of it.

This third chapter of Genesis is taken, by many scholars who are not given, at all, to the mythical interpretations, as being, in some proper sense, a myth. They discover a mythologic air in the story, and note a plain distinction of manner between it and the historic chapters that follow, or indeed between it and all other Scripture beside. Nor is it any just offense that such a conception is admitted; for a myth may as well be the vehicle of truth as any other form of language—be it epic, or ode, or parable, or fable. The sin of imputing a myth is when it is done against the fact of history, and not when it is the proper organ of history. And it may be that a myth occurs in revelation, just because there is, at the time, no culture of thought, and philosophy, and reflective reason, deep enough to express, or conceive the matter given, in a way of didactic statement. It is, in fact, historic, because it is the form of story for a matter profoundly abstruse in its nature, and possible to be conceived, as yet, in no other form.

It comes out accordingly, laboring under such limitations of thought and culture, that the eternal law of right is a tree, and the knowledge of good and evil a fruit that hangs on it, and the declared threatenings of death, notifications of the consequences otherwise unknown. Temptation figures in the story as a serpent, and the new-begun race are summoned to a conflict with him, and an assured triumph over him. Then pass out the sad pair, excluded from all possible self-recovery, as if fenced away by the flashing swords of cherubim, to work and suffer, and conquer, as God and his Son will help them.

Now there seems to be a peculiar fitness in conceiving the first sin to be thus specially concerned with the original law of duty—the law before government—because that law is really pronounced in the simple fact of being a moral nature. Existing as a moral nature, a man, Adam was already in that law, and the issuing of any command or prohibition, regarding a matter of action, would bind him, only as an executory application of that law. Not even killing, under the statute "thou shalt not kill," becomes a crime of murder, save as the perpetrator is found to have connected the statute with the prior law of laws, and done the deed as a wrong, by "malice aforethought." No particular act is sinful, save as the prior law of right is implicitly violated in it. It makes no difference, therefore, whether the forbidden tree be taken as a mythic conception of the law before government, or as an arbitrary, outward test of obedience in particular action; for no such test could touch the sense of obligation, save as it implicitly came under, and carried along with it, the already felt obligation of right. All the statutes we speak of are executory of this law, else they are nothing. Any fall must be transacted really before this law; for the guilt of breaking any law creates a fall, only as this grand, all-inclusive law is cast off, and the regulative principle of the life is changed. Be it touching a tree, or tasting a fruit, the sin has all its meaning in the fact that everlasting right is cast away, and the golden harmony of right dissolved.

The Fall specially related to the Law before government.

This being true, I see not any way of describing a fact so deep, and, for ages, so far beyond the possible conception of men, that could be at all equal to this paradise, and tree, and fruit, and fall, and final expulsion, and flashing sword of cherubim. The profound reality of the fall must, in any view, have been passed before the eternal, inborn law of right; and the death and the curse that followed, signify a great deal more as declaratives of natural consequence, in such a breaking out of law, than they can, as penal sentences of desert, in the matter of tasting a fruit.

Here then is the want and true place of redemption. It must have some primary and even principal reference to the law before government, and not to any instituted law, or statute, or judicial penalty existing under that. Every thing God does in his legislations, and punishments, and Providential governings of the world, is done to fortify and glorify the Law before Government. All that he will do, in redemptive suffering and sacrifice, revolves about this prior Everlasting Law, in the same manner. In this law his supreme last ends are gathered; out of this law all his beatitudes and perfections have their spring. No so great thing as redemption can have principal respect to any thing else.

CHAPTER II.

INSTITUTED GOVERNMENT.

WHAT is to be understood by God's instituted government has been already indicated in a general way; if we are to conceive it more accurately, we must first of all, distinguish what is included in a moral nature as being necessary to it; and then all that we find superadded, or conjoined to it, will be the administrative matter God has instituted, as a religious polity for the world. A moral nature, in the closest sense of the term, appears to be no matter of divine contrivance, more than the circles are in which the heavens are set—it must be a nature that can think the everlasting law, and has liberty of will to reject, or embrace it. God is not obliged to create this moral nature, but if such a nature is to be created, it can not, as far as the necessary idea is concerned, be either less or different. But there is room outside of this, for a large creative outfit and providential management, where contrivance, and counsel, and statute, and judgment, and all that belongs to an administrative polity may get ample range of opportunity. And here we find the instituted government of God. In this government, counsel and will

Instituted Government—what it is.

are added, to maintain the everlasting law. God undertakes, in this, to be its Guardian and Vindicator, making specific applications, adding retributive enforcements, casting soul and body, as far as contrivance may, and arranging the whole economy of causes, to throw the strongest possible motives on the side of right, and against the choice of wrong, or continuance in it.

Comprehends law, penalty, Providence, and grace.

Inasmuch, too, as the government he institutes looks beyond mere ideas of legal enforcement, comprehending, or at least associating, purposes of recovery, he will incorporate a grand machinery of discipline, and also of reconciliation, working by all the secret griefs of persons, and public woes of society—by the migrations of conquered peoples, by the persecutions of religion, by the oppressions of governments, by the wars and rebellions overruled. And then to these he will add, for the same final end, what is more effective than all discipline, the incarnate mission of Christ, and all Christly causes, the mission also of the Holy Spirit, with all Spirit-causes threading the world's bosom; the church also, the word, life, death, resurrection, and eternal judgment. The matter is large, but solidly compacted in God's eternal counsel, not intelligible always to us, but intelligible to Him—good as intelligible; because it is the solemn ordering of his will, for the one good end of right.

That we may conceive the nature and offices of this instituted government more exactly, let us note a few points that will require to be observed, in the right

understanding of the relation it holds to the law before government, and also farther on, to the vicarious sacrifice and free salvation of Christ.

1. Let it be observed that law and obligation do not begin with God's will, and are not created by his will.

Law exists before God's will.

It appears to be the supposition of many, that God creates all law by his will, and can make any thing right, or obligatory, by his enactment. Contrary to this he makes nothing obligatory which is not right, or somehow helpful to right, enacting nothing in which he is not first commanded, as regards the principle, by that everlasting, ideal law, in which even his goodness itself is fashioned. In one view, all the statutes he enacts are explicatory, simply, of the law before government. In another view, they are only vindicatory of the same. So that the one fundamental precept of right contains, or demands, in a way of organic enforcement, all the statutes ordained; having these for its complete explication, or fulfillment, and being fitly vindicated by the executive energy of these. The law before government measures, in this manner, all the law declared by government, only it obtains an immense accession of authority by the specifications in which it is drawn out, and the sanctions of God's infinite will superadded for its enforcement.

It is a great mistake of multitudes, and one that amounts well-nigh to a superstition, that they take the

Decalogue not fundamental.

decalogue, or ten commandments, for the fundamental law of duty and religion, back of which there is no first principle more radical,

or inclusive. Just contrary to this, they are most of them statutes reënacted from the common law maxims, prevalent among the people to whom they are given. Indeed, they have a great part of their excellence, in that which is their defect; viz., in their merely preventive, negative form; running, all but one of them—"thou shalt not," "thou shalt not,"—as if made for a people who had lost all sense of obligation to the positive good of a well-doing, right-doing life, and could only be reached, by commanding them away from wrongs they love to practice. In the one positive statute—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor as thyself," there was really something fundamental; it was in fact the law of laws; but for just that reason, it was too much, and the ten particular negatives signified more to such low servile natures, because of their contracted quantity and minatory sound.

2. The instituted government differs from the law before government, in the fact that it inaugurates justice and penal sanctions. There is no express sanction to vindicate the law absolute, and no definitely understood sanction. Certain effects of disorder and pain would follow disobedience, but that they would follow in any scale of desert, we do not know. The justice they will execute, therefore, is only a blind *quasi* justice, if it be any thing which deserves the name. But the instituted government of God is fast anchored in the terms of justice, declaring definite penalties, and maintaining them with impartial exactness. It rules by the majes-

Justice pertains to Instituted Government.

tic will-force of God, asserted in its statutes and penalties. And, in this fact, it gains a mighty accession of power; especially when considered as in reference to minds already broken loose from obedience.

In one view, it was the beauty and dignity of the impersonal law, that it spoke only by its own excellence, with no adventitious, or external compulsions to help it. It would rule by what it is, and not by what will be done for it when violated. In this manner it would most fitly address righteous minds; speaking to them even as it does to God. No sanctions appealing to interest, or fear, would be at all appropriate to them, but would even be a mockery rather of their liberty; for to be in the right is already their choice, and they love it, even as God does, because it is right. Enforcements are wholly out of place, till such time as they are sunk away from right into the lower ranges of motivity, where the smart of justice and its penal sanctions becomes fit argument for them. To arrest them now and turn them back, on such kind of consideration as prepares them to be taken with the love of goodness and right for their own sake, is the first thing wanted. Nothing will answer for them, in a way of being recovered, but to have their collision with a government fortified by sanctions penally threatened and judically executed. And this brings me to say—

3. That instituted government, if not taken in the large view as containing, is the necessary co-factor of, redemption. By it the law before government is reën-

acted, or applied specifically, and the definitely enforced applications are so many points of obligation impressed. The soul therefore, living under sin, can not drum itself to sleep in mere generalities of wrong; for it hears condemning thunders breaking in from almost every point of duty in the scheme of life. The moral sense too is mightily quickened by the arrival of justice, and the tremendous energy in which it comes. For it is a great mistake to imagine that the sanctions of justice are valuable only as intimidations. They are God's strange work, and the fearful earnestness they show raises our moral impressions, or convictions, to the highest pitch of tensity. Capital punishments, in the civil state have their value, in the same way, not in merely making it fearfully perilous to commit the crime so punished, but a great deal more in the tremendous reverberation raised in our moral nature, when the public law utters its opinion of the crime, in sanctions so appalling. Operating in these ways, to enforce and sharpen moral conviction, the Scriptures are always conceiving the instituted law as a necessary co-factor in the matter of redemption. It is even declared, to be "not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient;" as if it were set like the cherubim before Paradise, to flash, and cut, and drive away, and pen the guilty in their outcast lot. So far the instituted government is law for the sake of redemption. It is called, indeed, "the letter that killeth," "the ministration of condemnation;" but the meaning is

The necessary co-factor of redemption.

simply, that the knowledge of sin is by it, and that when a soul is truly slain by the law, it is only the more ready to be quickened by the faith of a gratuitous mercy. Good in itself it becomes death unto the subject, that sin may appear sin, according to its now discovered perversity and exceeding sinfulness. And so—this is the gospel outline—"what the law could not do in that it was weak, through the flesh [or fallen state of sin] God sending his Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and [to be a Saviour] for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law [even the eternal righteousness of God] might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."

There is also still another point of view, in which the instituted government of God works redemptively.

Includes world-government as co-factor with redemption.

All the previous history of the world, from the creation downward, till the fullness of time for Christ is come; all the migrations, deliverances, captivities; all the callings, and covenants, and prophetic inspirations, have been managed to bring on the fit day, and get the preparations ready. And, besides all this, the people have had a religion organized by statute, and been drilling in rites and observances, divinely ordered—all profoundly related to the grand vicarious sacrifice to come. In this manner, the religious mind has been cast in the mold of Christian ideas, and a language has been provided, otherwise impossible, on artificial roots, for the reception and perpetual publication of the new gospel. God's instituted law therefore,

instead of being a simply killing agency, a ministration of death, was in fact, casting molds of life from the first, and commanding on, so to speak, unto the great salvation. Christ never could have come, in fact, if the law had not been casting patterns for him, and getting ready all the great external matters of the world's empire. Again—

4. It is important, at this early point, to notice a distinction which will often be recurring in the future stages of the argument; viz., the distinction between righteousness and justice. Thus the righteousness of God is the rightness of God, before the eternal, self-existent law of right; and the justice of God is the vindicatory firmness of God, in maintaining his own instituted law. One is by obedience to a law before God's will; the other is by the retributive vindication of a law that is under and by God's will itself. One is without option, before immutable, unconditioned, everlasting law; the other is what God wills and does, in the world of conditions, that is of means and measures. God must be righteous; God will be just. That he must be, because it is right; this he will be, because he has undertaken to maintain the right and govern for it. There is the character from which he rules; here is the reason of polity by which he rules. Without that, he could not be himself; without this he can not administer a government that will command his subjects. Righteousness is necessary to the endowment of his person; justice is necessary for a wholly different reason; one for the

Righteousness and Justice distinguished.

reason of character, the other for the reason of polity. Nothing can ever dispense with that; this can be tempered only by that which conspires with it, working for the same ends. Righteousness in God accordingly is satisfied only with righteousness in men; justice is satisfied with whatever makes good the dishonors of violated law, working with it, to fulfill its end.

The justice of God is grounded in the wants of his government; being that which enforces it, that which creates respect for it, and for the ruler, and gives the emphasis of immovable authority to his word and will. He must govern by no fast and loose method, surrender nothing to chance, or caprice, or the inability to inflict pain. And so he must command a character of justice for his government, even as he has a character of righteousness for himself, in the everlasting, immovable adhesion of his nature to right.

5. It is another distinction of God's instituted government, that, while the law before government is impersonal, this is intensely personal, and finally becomes a person, or scarcely different from a person. I have already spoken of the fact that, being from the will of God, it takes on, so far, a personal character. What I would now say is more; viz., that we commonly do not go back of God, when we think of his government—never do it, in fact, save when we are occupied reflectively on its grounds and reasons—but we practically take God for his government, and his government for God. It is now a wholly concrete affair, and no

Instituted Government is personal; virtually a person.

more an abstraction. In this manner, it gets vivacity, and a look of reciprocity. We do not like, in fact, to call it a government, for that is not relational enough to meet our feeling, but we drop the institutional conception, taking up the personal, and calling it King—God is King, that is government enough; and we prefer to let our mind be occupied wholly with his royalties and the homage due to his attributes. More intensely, because externally personal, the government is still to become; for Christ will be visible Messiah, that is visible King, King of Righteousness and so of Peace; whereupon, beholding the government now upon his shoulder, we shall crown him gladly with our invocation—"Give the King thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's son." Nor will the glorious kingship be any the less personal and tenderly dear, that being withdrawn from sight, he is substituted by the Holy Spirit invisible, going through all things, and present every where; for he will be the Spirit of Christ shed forth on us by Christ, and maintaining, in the very center of our hearts, a Kingdom which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Absolute necessity of instituted government.

It is sufficiently obvious, from these specifications, that the instituted government of God is a matter of no secondary interest, compared with the law before government in which it is grounded. It is the mental habit of some, to be specially pleased with that which is back in

the field of abstractions; and such might think it better to have only the ideal law, without any polity of concrete government organized to enforce it. In which, under the pretext of depth, they take up, in fact, the most superficial judgment possible. They consent, in this, to let go just that without which existence itself were of no value; for how soon should we cast off the ideal law in some experiment of disobedience, and then our moral nature itself is a broken affair, past all power of self-recovery. Without redemption existence is valueless, and there is no redemption without an instituted government.

Dangers apprehended from the remission of sins without compensation.

But there comes in here from an opposite direction, or from within the fold of the gospel itself, a class of theological objectors, who apprehend a complete sweeping away of God's instituted law and justice, by the free remission of sins. I propose no argument just here with their objections, I will only state them that they may not seem to be overlooked.

Law becomes only advice.

Thus they insist that, if Christ does not bear the penalties of sins himself, and yet takes them away from the guilty, he thereby also takes away all due enforcements of law, and leaves the precept to be mere advice. Where go the laws of God, when the penalties of transgression are remitted *gratis*, by universal proclamation, and the promise given to every transgressor that he shall even be justified? What could any civil state, or government hope, from a law punishing assassination by death, and promulgating,

at the same time, a free pardon to every criminal suing for it?

In confirmation of their argument, they also remind us that when certain teachers, claiming a more than common illumination, toss all such objections aside, extolling it as one of the fine things in Christ, that he finds government enough in God's love and paternity, and is willing to let go what are called the Jewish rigors, the effects are such as to show most convincingly the essential lightness of the doctrine. A proper insight of human nature, saying nothing of the gospel, ought, they contend, to open our eyes to a discovery of what is more competent; for to make a government of mere love and paternity is, in fact, to make just no government at all, but is, simply to throw the whole matter of duty and character loose upon the chances of a coaxing process, where the subject, living in a lower plane, has too little care for the goodness shown him, to get any thing out of it, but a license of impunity for whatever he likes best. In such doctrine there is no ring of conviction. God and religion die out of it, and a certain modishness of philanthropy is all that can long remain.

The objectors also vary their argument, alleging that when God forgives sin, without some penal satisfaction, his rectoral honor and character are made equivocal, if not fatally diminished. Sin they say, and truly, tramples the honor of God. If then he farther consents to let it do so, what becomes of his authority and respect as a ruler? To

God's rectoral honor surrendered.

vindicate the integrity of his position by punishments duly enforced, would countervail the dishonors of transgression. But what becomes of his honor and rectoral authority, when his threatenings turn out to be but a mock ammunition, in which there is no projectile included? Who will be awed by his will when he governs only *in terrorem*, with the terror, in fact, omitted?

His Righteousness made equivocal.

Again the righteousness of God appears, they say, to be made equivocal, in the same manner. He commands what is right to be done, because it is right, and because right is an everlasting and absolute law in its own nature—necessary to all created mind, necessary even to himself. About this grand ideal of right he builds the whole fabric of his government; all his laws assert and interpret this; all his penalties enforce this; all his judgments are the discipline he wields for this. What then does it signify that he freely remits all the possible wrongs of wrong-doing, as against his great central principle of right, or righteousness? The principle, indeed, is none the less right; it is only deserted; that too by Him who undertook to be its vindicator and defender. The enforcement is now gone, and with it, what was more impressive, the solid majesty of that greatness, which itself was built up in the principle of it, and stood in sacred awe before the eyes of all creatures, as the unchangeable Righteousness.

It is another variation also of the damage or loss they discover in God's rectoral character, that the supposed

free-remission is not only a discontinuance of his operative justice, but appears to blur the evidences of justice, in his character. The power of God's attitude before his subjects will be determined, to a great extent, they allege, and truly, by the impression he makes of his immovable adhesion to justice. The punishments denounced against transgression will themselves have a certain deterring force, as being denounced, but a vastly greater force comes into impression, whether in the civil state or in the government of God over souls, when justice is duly exalted and consecrated, by what may be called the dread sacrifice and strange work of punishment. There is such majesty in justice thus consecrated, that moral natures feel it all through and tremble responsively to it. Punishments have a certain value, as appeals to fear, and as motives addressed to self-interest, but the sense of goodness, armed by justice, strikes into the moral nature itself far more deeply and by an immediate efficacy. It can not therefore be taken away without great apparent loss.

God's justice obliterated.

In arguments like these, showing the probability of damage to the integrity and authority of God's government, from a free remission of sins, coupled with no penal satisfaction of justice, there is, it must be admitted, an appearance of reason. How far it is an appearance deduced from political analogies, that will disappear when such analogies are duly qualified, will be hereafter seen.

CHAPTER III.

THE ANTAGONISM BETWEEN JUSTICE AND MERCY.

CERTAIN points were stated, in the close of the last chapter, where the integrity of law and justice appears to be involved in necessary damage from the introduction of forgiveness, or a free justification. Under the various schemes of judical satisfaction, it is accordingly assumed, that Christ, by his suffering life and death, made the compensation necessary, and prepared, whether by this method, or by that, what is called the *ground* of justification. In this manner, God has two dispensations, one coming after, and the other going before, and related to each other as mercy to justice, forgiveness to punishment, justification to condemnation. Having begun to govern by mere law, enforced by rewards and penalties, and by that having failed to secure his proposed ends of character and eternal felicity, he brings in a second dispensation, by Christ, to rescue the guilty from the deserved penalties of justice; which it does, by means of his suffering offered as a satisfaction to justice. And so the law, it is conceived, maintains its integrity still, when otherwise it would be quite broken down, or even virtually given up.

Here then is the great contested matter of the Chris-

tian salvation, and the issue made up at this point, is now to be tried. I am obliged to disallow the necessity of any such penal satisfaction, or indeed of any compensation at all to God's justice for the release of transgression; that is, of any compensation beyond what is incidental to the vicarious sacrifice and the power it obtains by declaring the righteousness of God.

No compensation to justice needed.

As regards this question, two kinds of answer may be given that are quite distinct and independent of each other; one that turns upon a due qualification of the antagonism between justice and mercy—which will occupy the present chapter; and another which considers specifically the several kinds of damage that are supposed to follow, when sins are forgiven without compensation—which will occupy the next three chapters. The present chapter is not necessary to my general argument, but is a kind of interpolation, and is introduced, not because it is required by my doctrine, but because a revision of our impressions concerning the supposed antagonism appears to be due to the general subject, and even to the honors of divine justice itself.

Two modes of argument.

Undertaking this revision, I put forward two points, where we seem to fall into misconceptions, that increase the antagonism between justice and mercy, and make it wider and more complete than it really is.

1. Having much to say about justice, as an exact doing upon wrong of what it deserves, we begin to imagine that justice goes by desert, both in its rules

and measures, and thinks of nothing else. It follows, of course, that justice lets go being just, exactly as it falls below the scale of desert in its executed penalties. We have many scriptures also to cite for authority; as when it is declared that God will "render to every man according to his deeds," "reward every man according to his works;" or when it is declared that every man "shall receive the things done in the body," having them as it were put back upon him for his punishment; or when the *lex talionis* itself is formally appealed to as the rule of God's justice—"For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." All these and other like Scripture expressions are taken to mean about the same thing, as giving back to wrong just what it gives, and we conceive it to be a matter a great deal more definite than it is, to say that justice is the making of a transgressor to suffer what he deserves.

Justice in the scale of desert misconceived.

In a certain popular sense, this language and all the scripture citations referred to are good—nothing could be more forcible or impressive—but, when we ask precisely what we mean by it, we shall be more at a loss than we expected. Is it any fit conception of God's justice, that he will put evil upon a wrong-doer, just because he is bad and according to his badness, apart from all uses to the man himself, or to others, or to the government he violates? Is it the divine justice to fly at evil doing and make it feel just as much evil as it practices? Is there no counsel in God's justice, no consideration of ends, or uses?

We can hardly be satisfied, I think, with this. Indeed we could not approve ourselves in putting on a wrong-doer the evil he deserves to suffer, without finding some reason for it besides his desert. And yet we could not be satisfied, in reducing God's justice to a mere consideration of public ends, or reasons of beneficence. We feel that there is, and ought to be something more fiery and fateful in his justice than that. What then is the conception that meets our feeling, and what, exactly, do we mean, when we say that justice and desert are ideas that go thus fitly together?

The wrath-principle of justice no law to God.

We mean, first of all, that there is a deep wrath-principle in God, as in all moral natures, that puts him down upon wrong, and girds him in avenging majesty for the infliction of suffering upon wrong. Just as we speak of our felt indignations, and tell how we are made to burn against the person, or even the life of the wrong-doer, so God has his heavier indignations, and burns with his more consuming fire. But this combustion of right anger, this wrath-impulse so fearfully moved, is no law to God certainly, requiring him to execute just what will exhaust the passion. It is only that girding power of justice that puts him on the work of redress, and that armature of strength upon his feeling, that enables him to inflict pain without shrinking. And then, at just this point, comes in another function, equally necessary; viz., wisdom, counsel, administrative reason, which directs the aim, tempers the degree, and regulates the measures and times of the

pain. Thus it is that we ourselves dispense and graduate justice; and then, standing at the hither point of our vindicatory passion, we say that we have done upon the wrong-doer just what he deserves. Standing, farther off, at the point of counsel, and considering how we have graduated the measure of his punishment, we should say, that we have done upon him, only what the welfare of society, and the due sanctification of law requires.

There is, then, no such thing in God, or any other being, as a kind of justice which goes by the law of desert, and ceases to be justice when ill desert is not exactly matched by suffering. God's ends, and objects, and public reasons, have as much to do with his justice as the wrath-principle has, which arms and impels his justice. It is no breach of justice therefore, and no real fault of proceeding, that God tempers justice by mercy, and mercy by justice, whenever he can most advance the solid interests of character and society by so doing. There is no principle which any human being can state, or even think, that obliges him, on pain of losing character, to do by the disobedient exactly as they deserve. The rule, taken as a measure, has no moral signification. God therefore need not give Himself up to wrath, in order to be just; he can have the right of counsel still. Perfect liberty is left him to do by the wrong-doer better than he deserves, and yet without any fault of justice—better that is, considering his own condemning judgment of him, and the man's condemning judgment of himself, than he might

well do, or even ought to do, if the sublime interests of his government should require.

2. It is another misconception, just now stated in the introduction of this chapter, that we assume the essential priority of law and justice, as related to mercy; as if it were another dispensation having a right, in its own precedence, to be undisturbed and qualified by no different kind of proceeding. Was not every thing put upon the footing of law, and since we have broken through the law, how can God bring us into justification without overturning the law Himself? Will he mock his law, because we have mocked it? and will he give it up, because we have turned away from it? What remains then for him, but to do justice upon us? How can he justify, in this view, unless there be some satisfaction, or compensation of justice provided?

Another misconception as respects the priority of justice.

There does not after all appear to be any solid merit in this kind of argument. It matters not whether we say that we have two dispensations, or one; in some sense we have two, viz., justice and mercy; but it does not appear that there is any priority of time in one as related to the other, or that both are not introduced to work together for one common result. Then, whether we understand the mythic tree, or test-tree of the garden, to be the law before government, or to be some instituted precept in which it is presented more specifically, the sin of the sin is, in either case, the casting off of

Justice and mercy co-ordinate and co-operative.

the former; that which carries with it a revolution of character down to its deepest principle. And the "death" that followed was the moral dying that must come with such a revolution—no death of God's infliction, but a declarative death, connected with the fall out of principle. Then follows what is called the promise, and what is called the curse—the promise first and the curse afterward—that as the new hope, this as the new state of wrath and penal discipline. And both together, having one and the same general aim, are inaugurated, as the right and left hand, so to speak, of God's instituted government. They are to have a properly joint action; one to work by enforcement, and the other by attraction, or moral inspiration; both having it as their end or office, to restore and establish the everlasting, impersonal law. God never expected and never undertook, calling that his government, to bring his subjects on and consummate his purposes regarding them, by statutes and penalties of justice. It might as well be imagined that he undertook to govern his heavens by the centrifugal force, and added the centripetal afterward, to bring the flying bodies back.

There is a certain antagonism, it is true, in the modes of action observed by the law-power of God's statutes and the justifying power of Christ; even as there is between the two great forces of nature just referred to. But the antagonism is formal, not real; partial, not absolute. They are to be co-factors in the operation of a government that undertakes, for its object, the reconciliation of fallen men to God—a state of beatific

worship and complete society. And to this end one is set to enforce obligation, stir the conscience, intimidate and set back the impetuosity of sin, so to waken right conviction and prepare a felt necessity of the other; and then the sensibility taken hold of and impressed, softened and melted, in one word drawn by that other, is to win a choice, raise that choice into a love, in that love become a new revelation, so a salvation And so much is there in this twofold action that without some such grip of law and justice on the soul, no grace-power of God could ever win it back; and without the grace-power felt in its blessed attractions, no mere law-and-justice power could beget any thing closer to God than a compelled obedience, or fear that hath torment. There was in fact an antecedent necessity of their conjoined working, that, in the due qualifying of each other, they may complement what would otherwise be a fault in each.

How the two co-operate in redemption itself.

Thus by the retributive principle running through all our natural and Providential experience, the self-sacrificing, vicarious love-principle is so tempered as to make our time of grace a thoroughly rugged and stern holiday; while by the love-principle, gently interfused, all the retributions of our experience are held back and qualified, to be only fomentations of thoughtfulness and holy conviction. Indeed we may go farther and have it as a fact discovered, that these partially contesting agencies only press us yet more effectively, because they seem to be in a race for us with each other. The

retributive principle is propagating disorder, misrule, blindness, obduracy of feeling in our sin, closing up, as it were, the gates of receptivity; so that shortly nothing shall be left for love and sacrifice to work upon—at which point, as far as we can see, justice gets entire possession of us and has our everlasting future to itself. Or reversing the example, the mercy-principle in Christ's sacrifice gets advantage of the retributive, winning the soul to itself and begetting it anew in God's liberty—when of course the justice-claim falls off to be a claim gone by forever. In this manner they both work together, striving, as it were, to outstrip each other, and exert, in that way, only the more stringent motive pressure on the life and character. Let no one then imagine that they are in a state of real contrariety, because they are so far antagonistic in their action. The celestial analogies already referred to show that order and static equilibrium are, in fact, the resultant of contending forces. Were either one of these to stop its endeavor, the condition of wreck would be forthcoming speedily. And just so nature, all through, is packed with analogies that correspond. Heat and cold, light and darkness, land and sea, central fires and weights of rock above, are all doing battle round us in the same way, and the result is an accruing order and stability that represents eternal beneficence.

How far then is it conceived by God, in the appointments of justice and mercy, that they really infringe upon each other; how far that the rugged and rough power of justice is like to be injured and borne down

by its tender competitor, enough to want some compensation for its injuries? The real fact is, that God's instituted law really commands through love and sacrifice; for no created mind could possibly be thrust straight through into good, by penal enforcements and motivities. It never is in good, till it has cast out fear and gone forever clear of it, to love the right, or the holy, for its own sake. Law has nothing to do with such a result save initially. It even supposes a captivating power working with it, to bring out the result, and consummate the love in which the law's intentions are fulfilled.

Or suppose that in the race of contestation just now described, it should happen, as one or the other gets exclusive and final dominion of the soul, that the excluded party suffers a real infringement. Then, by the supposition, justice may have taken away the chances and infringed the rights of mercy, as truly as mercy can have violated the rights of justice; when if compensations are to be made, the mercy-impulse of God's feeling has as good a right to compensation from his justice, as that from his mercy. For his mercy is as old as his justice, and began as soon, and is a character certainly not less dear or sacred. Justice, too, may as fitly groan for the pacification of mercy, as mercy for the pacification of justice.

On this point of infringement and rightful compensation, I have looked intently for some declaration of Scripture, and am only surprised that I do not find what

I should have expected to meet in many examples; for nothing is plainer than the distinctness of manner and office, in what are called justice and mercy. One acts retributively, the other compassionately; one by laws of natural consequence, the other by supernatural intervention; one goes by desert, the other by self-sacrifice transcending desert; one condemns just where the other undertakes to even justify; so that, factors though they be in forwarding a common result, we should not be surprised to find them set against each other in Scripture terms, and described as reconcilable, only in the fact that one pays tribute to the other. Still I know not where it is done. God nowhere signifies that he has given up the world to the prior right of justice, and that mercy shall come in, only as she pays a gate-fee for the right of entrance.* A reference is frequently made to two passages of Scripture as implying one of them, and the other affirming, a repugnance between justice and mercy, which only God's wisdom in his Son can sufficiently reconcile. Thus, when it is de-

How the Scriptures hold this antagonism.

* This complete silence of the Scripture, concerning a compensation, or necessary satisfaction paid to justice, has probably been noticed by many. I have only fallen upon a single instance, in the Lectures of Mr. Veysie. Admitting the commonly received Scripture ideas of reconciliation and propitiation, he considers all that is said of satisfaction, as their necessary ground, to be originated wholly by the speculations or constructive theories, of men; and he says—"Now the sacred writers nowhere, as far as I know, expressly assert any satisfaction at all as having been effected by the death of Christ..—*Veysie's Bampton Lectures.—I.*

clared, in sovereign promise, that "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other,"* the supposition is that by some wondrous compensative grace of God, as in Christ, these incompatibles are made to coalesce. Whereas nothing is meant, as will be seen by a reference to the Psalm itself, but that in the public restoration promised, goodness and fidelity, and right and concord, shall return as a benignant constellation of graces, to bless and adorn the new society. Again it is repeated, how often, that "mercy rejoiceth against judgment;"† as if that were even the key principle of the gospel plan. It very well might be, only taking the two to be merely as distinct in their action, as was just now represented. But then it would be just as true, that judgment rejoiceth against mercy. The passage however has nothing to do with either of these two modes of contrariety. By the "mercy" it means simply the man who does mercy, and that *he* rejoiceth against judgment, or over it, in the sense that his heart is too strong, his confidence too immovable, to be shaken by any sort of condemnation—"he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy, and mercy [when it is faithfully done] rejoiceth against judgment." "Boldness in the day of judgment" is a promise of the same thing.

It would be difficult, on the other hand, to represent all the figures of community and close conjunction held by these words in the Scripture. Sometimes it is con-

* Ps. lxxxv. 10. † Jas. ii. 13.

ceived that God's mercy has its opportunity in his justice, and not any obstacle at all. Even as the great Hebrew poet, conscious of no dereliction from orthodoxy, testifies, "Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy; *for* thou renderest to every man according to his work."* Sometimes the two co-factors are strung together, as pearls that are alike, on the same string—"I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth;"† "The weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith;"‡ "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God."§ They sometimes even cross over into the province one of the other, and change offices; "the terror of the Lord persuades,"‖ even as "the cross lifted up draws;"¶ and "the law slays"** even as Christ rejected "reproves of sin."†† Again they both alike support the appeal of warning—"behold the judge standeth at the door!"‡‡ "behold the bridegroom cometh!"§§ The rule of judgment is also declared to be the same in both, according to even the same chapter—"For as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;"‖‖ "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel."¶¶ The judge, too, is to be at once the eternal Lawgiver and, in some equally true sense, to be Christ himself. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth

* Ps. lxii. 12. † Jer. ix. 24. ‡ Math. xxiii. 23. § Rom. xi. 22.
‖ 2. Cor. v. 11. ¶ John xii. 32. ** Rom. vii. 11. †† John xvi. 8.
‡‡ Jas. v. 9. §§ Math. xxv. 6. ‖‖ Rom. ii. 12. ¶¶ Rom ii. 16.

do right?"* "Hath given him authority also to execute judgment because he is the Son of man."†

The old and new dispensations, how related.

We shall find also, both in the old Testament and the New, declarations made of God and of his Son that represent both in the same general combination of attribute; asserting themselves, at once, both in all the rigors of justice, and all the tender concern of a forgiving sacrifice and sympathy. Thus we have from the Old—"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, [that is the incorrigible.]"‡ And again, answering exactly to this we have from the New—"Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, [continueth incorrigible in it] of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile."§ And what have we, in fact, but a complete summing up of all such combinations in these two words—"the wrath of the Lamb?"

Does any one ask what, in this view, becomes of the superior grace, or graciousness of the New Testament? I see no room for a superior grace, that requires a superior and better kind of God. The two dispensations are not two, in the sense of being opposite, but only in the sense of being one of them more full and complete than the other at once could be. The New Testament is only

* Gen. xviii. 25. † John v. 27. ‡ Ex. xxxiv. 6–7. § Rom. ii. 9.

a new edition of the Old, greatly enlarged and improved —yet still accordant faithfully in its radical import. They both declare the same God, only in different stages of human thought or development; neither of them could be true, if they gave us different kinds of God, or of government. Still though God is just in both, and merciful in both, the former was likely to be taken more legally and felt more as a bondage, because it was a drill of outward rites and observances; and the latter to be taken even as a deliverance from that bondage, because of the incarnate person who could fitly represent to men's feeling the dear charities of God, and show the rites fulfilling their idea in his own complete and all-sufficient sacrifice. No one was obliged to stay fast in the legalities of the old religion; multitudes of the glorious fathers and prophet teachers and little ones of faith did not; they broke through into the faith-world, as God was helping them to do, even by means of their rites; but in general they stuck fast in the letter, and the letter was death. The new ministration therefore in the incarnate person was life in comparison, a ministration of righteousness that doth exceed in glory.

God dispenses justice in a right of discretion.

But while the offices of justice and mercy are so plainly in a close relationship, and are brought along so cordially together in the Scripture, intertwining both as forces of good in the government and governmental character of God, I most freely admit the necessity that God's justice should be maintained in the highest possible

degree of emphasis. It is necessary to God's administrative character. As regards that character, he can as well be perfect in a shortened benevolence, as in a restricted and diminished justice. Or if we look only at the defenses of law, and the motivities at work for the regaining of souls, it is a matter of the highest necessity, that there should be no appearance of slackness in God, and that his justice should be kept fast in the loftiest, most sovereign pitch of firmness possible. And what is this? Is it the truest firmness of justice that it is itself fast bound by the letter, having no liberty but to exact precisely the pound of flesh, suffering no reduction? Is the weight of God's justice heaviest, when it is according to some formally exact standard of measurement conceived for it by theologic opinion—a standard it must meet, in order to be itself justified? Must he be a precisionist in order to be passed as just? On the contrary he seems to me to be most grandly just, when he holds his firmness in a certain way of liberty—most grandly merciful too, when he dispenses mercy, as one taking counsel of justice. He should seem, in his justice, to say that he will suffer no jot or tittle of the law to fail; and then to make the saying still more certainly good, he should, for the law's sake, add such argument of love and mercy, as will restore both jot and tittle and, if possible, the whole broken body of the law. Nothing goes highest in God's attributes, when it loses out the chance of liberty and discretionary counsel. Not ever the righteousness of God will be fitly expressed, when

his eternal liberty in the principle, is hampered by the letter, in his penal enforcements.

Justice dispensed by natural law.

We shall conceive this subject most worthily, I think, if we revert a moment to first principles in the universal order. Saying nothing here of justice, as regarding its necessities, or ends, or the vindicatory character, or the vindicatory function it discharges in the matter of government, let us look directly at the single point of executive certainty and firmness, in the way of dispensing justice. And here we shall very soon convince ourselves, it appears to me, that God has not undertaken to dispense justice by direct infliction, but by a law of natural consequence. He has connected thus, with our moral and physical nature, a law of reaction, by which any wrong of thought, feeling, disposition, or act, provokes a retribution exactly fitted to it and, with qualifications already given, to the desert of it. And this law is, just like every law of natural order, inviolable, not subject to suspension, or discontinuance, even by miracle itself. And justice is, in this view, a fixed principle of order, as truly as the laws of the heavenly bodies.

This, too, seems to be the prevailing representation of the Scriptures; as when they testify that "the wages of sin is death;" "that whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" that the rust of gold and silver, cankered in the hoards of covetousness, "shall eat the flesh as it were fire;" that by the law of the judgment itself, we "shall receive the things done in the body"—having them come back as tormentors; that talents

improved shall be doubled, and talents misimproved "taken away;" that wickedness shall "go to its own place;" "go away;" "depart;" passing off henceforth to be with itself, and be "filled with its own devices." A good many declarations of Scripture appear to speak of something more nearly inflictive; but it is better to conceive, in such cases, that the language is declarative only of what is coming to pass, by the fixed laws and causes of natural retribution,—which laws and causes have a self-propagating action without limit; for no disorder can issue itself in order.

The natural law of justice never infringed by mercy.

And yet, as we have been saying, these same ordinances of justice are to go along with mercy and in some possible way of conjunction are to work out, with her, even redemption itself. But how is this? where is the possibility of this, without even a subverting, by mercy, of the retributive laws just described? Do I then subvert the law of gravity, when I lift a weight from the ground? or by kindling a fire, cause the smoke to ascend in spite of gravity? Or, when I forbid the simples of gunpowder to unite in the touch of fire, by throwing a water-bath on them, do I therefore overthrow, because I so decisively dominate in, the chemical affinities concerned? Were not all these laws and affinities intended to be just so far submitted to my will? If then, by my will, acting in among them, they are brought to act in serviceable ways, as they otherwise would not, or not to act at all, is their nature therefore violated, or their law discontinued?*

* Vide, Nature and the Supernatural, p. 58, §§.

No more are the ordinances of justice overturned, when mercy comes to them and blends her action with theirs. The executive laws of justice are natural; the person of Christ, his character, all the moral power he obtains in human feeling by his action, his beautiful life, his death of sacrifice, is supernatural. This kind of power too, working in men's hearts and dispositions, any one can see does not stop the causative forces of retribution working in the same. It only works in with them, as a qualifying agency. The same of course will be true, when the Holy Spirit takes the things of Christ—the same things—and, showing them inwardly, brings them into such highest power as they may exercise. Accordingly, when the mercy of the sacrifice, working in thus with and among the retributive causes of justice, issues a result which neither she nor they could issue alone, it no more follows that the order of justice is violated, than that nature's law of gravity, or chemical affinity is violated, in the examples just given. Still the justice-law goes on, doing exactly what was given it to do, only so far co-working or working in with mercy, as it was originally meant to do. Even as Christ came to nature in miracle, as a higher first term, doing all his mighty works without stopping, or suspending any law,* so, much more easily may it be true, that his new-creating and delivering work of mercy, operating only as by moral power, falls in conjunctively among the retributive causes of nature, and without

Mercy only interacts supernaturally with justice.

* Nature and the Supernatural, Chapter IX.

any discontinuance turns them to a serviceable office, in accomplishing its own great designs. Still they work on, subject to the fixed law of justice, which is neither subverted nor suspended, and never will be. It even assists the conversion of men, by acting strictly in character, as a condemning and slaying power.

Let us turn our thoughts then, for a moment, upon the relative working of these two forces, so generally considered to be wholly contrary and mutually destructive of each other, and see how they both get honor and sublimity together, when God has his liberty in them and wields them as in counsel; for he does it in a way to confirm and magnify both, never to diminish or weaken either. Thus, when we go out into life, the retributive causes of nature roll out their heavy caisson with us, and drag it down the road, making no stop, and turning never aside more than do the stars; and mercy comes out also in her soft gait and tender look of sorrow to go with us, in like faithful company. She looks upon the dread machine, goes before it, goes behind it, blesses nature's inflexible order in it; only putting on the soul itself her secret, supernatural touch, and the soft inward baptism of her feeling—even that which she has unfolded so powerfully in the facts of the cross —and dewing it thus with her tender mitigations, keeps it in the possibility of good; while the retributive causes go their way, and do their work, not arrested in their action, but only qualified resultantly, by

In their relative working they magnify each other.

the different kind of action blended with them. Finally the subject, quailing often, as in guilty dread, under the condemning justice, and drawn by the softening ministrations of mercy, comes to that final crisis, where he is either born, or never to be born of God.

Conversion by their joint action.

If it be the first, then, as he is born of God—partly by the quickening power of mercy, and partly by the slaying power of justice—the retributive causes begin to have a kind of action qualified by the now sovereign action of mercy. Instead of bearing every thing along in their own way, they consent, as it were, to roll under, giving now their much needed help to the dear co-factor whose triumph they have helped already, by continuing on, to do as in discipline, what before they were doing as in penal enforcement, and thundering as sublimely still below the horizon, as then they did above. The new-born disciple is imperfect, and they now fall in to have a chastening agency, for the correcting of such imperfections. And how dreadful, in severity sometimes, are these after-storms of discipline, that cross the track of the justified. It is even as if some mighty Nimrod, hunting in the shepherd's field, were setting his fierce dogs upon the straying ones, to chase them back to his fold.

Salvation glorifies justice.

Another stage arrives. Made ready for the change, they die and so at last go clear both of penalty and discipline together; only with such a sense, made fast in them, of the eminent majesty and immovable worth and truth of God's justice, that they would even feel it less profoundly, under

the distracting smart of its eternal pains themselves. They go home thus to God, to hide as lovingly in the bosom of his justice, as is any other of his tenderest attributes. And then how much forever does it mean, to chant the honors of justice—"even so, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy judgments."

Judgment vindicates mercy.

Go back now to the point of crisis and conceive it to be turned the other way,—that the transgressor growing penally hardened under the retributive causes of his nature, pushes finally by his day of rescue. Still the mercy clings to him, whispering still its "come," to mitigate the natural hardness and bitterness of his now incorrigible transgression. In due time comes the last change also here. Christ, who was the Saviour, is now the Judge, and he makes not the law simply, but the very principle of his cross and sacrifice too the standard of his judgment sentence. Every thing is included in this—"Ye did it not to me;" did it not, that is, in doing acts of mercy to "the least of these" little ones of their Master. And so the justice, working in God's causes, becomes itself the lictor and everlasting vindicator of mercy—not of legal statutes only, but of all Christly possibility and example; piling on additions of penalty, as much more severe, as the ill desert of wrong is now become more aggravated and appalling. Not that justice now has forever extirpated mercy by its judicial ascendancy. Rather is it become the body-guard of mercy forever—fencing not away any soul from it that will come to it for life, but maintaining the inviolable order of that pure society it

has undertaken to gather. Mercy will never be dead though it may be finally displaced; for mercy is a part of God, and God will never be thought as having let the cup dry up in his bosom, to indulge himself only in the wrathful severities of justice. Still God is love—always to be love—only the retributions of justice will be now so branded in, that no one turns himself to the love; holding still fast the "congenial horrors" that are so firmly fastened upon him, by his everlastingly persistent choices.

Now if any one imagines that God's eternal justice will be more effectually magnified, by running its career of penalty straight through, punishing the jot and tittle of wrong, by the jot and tittle of penalty, and even exacting the jot and tittle of satisfaction, before it can suffer forgiveness itself to forgive; I confess it does not so appear to me. I see no honor accruing to God's justice when it mortgages his whole nature beside; rather is it greatest, when he maintains it in a certain liberty, counseling for it and working his great ends of counsel by it. Nay it will be greatest, when it is closest in companionship with mercy, thundering strong help in the wars of her subduing ministry, and then avenging her rejected goodness at the close.

Both most honorable when working together.

In just the same way it might be shown, going over the ground again, that mercy never bears so grand a look, or moves so majestically, as when she takes counsel of justice. No man is ever so magnificently just as he that can be even tenderly merciful, no man so truly merciful

as one that can hold steadily exact the balance of truth and justice. Our highest impressions of God's justice are obtained, when we conceive it as the partly discretionary dispensation of a mind in the tenderness and loving patience of the cross; our highest impressions of his mercy, when we conceive it as the wonderful sacrifice to which even his justice allows him to bend. Little honor then does any one pay to God's judicial majesty, in a scheme of satisfaction that takes away his right of discretion, and requires him to stand for his exact equivalent of pain, according to the count of arithmetic.

In this exposition of the antagonism between justice, and mercy, I have said nothing of what may even be taken as being, in a certain view, their radical union. It is a little remarkable how near many writers will come to this conclusion, when treating of the harmony of God's attributes, who will yet, when treating of atonement, represent God's justice and mercy in a thoroughly grim aspect of collision. Take the following very respectable example:—"Wherefore we must so conceive of them as that, in all respects, they may be consistent and harmonious; as that his wisdom may not clash with his goodness, nor his goodness with his wisdom; as that his mercy may not jostle with his justice, nor his justice with his mercy; that is we must conceive of him to be as wise as he can be with infinite goodness, as good as he can be with infinite wisdom, as just as he can be with infinite mercy, as merciful as he can be with infinite

They even coalesce at the root.

justice. For to be wise beyond what is good, is craft; to be good beyond what is wise, is dotage; to be just beyond what is merciful, is rigor; to be merciful beyond what is just, is easiness; that is, they are all imperfection, so far as they are beyond what is perfect. Wherefore we ought to be very careful not to represent these his moral perfections as running a tilt at one another; but to conceive them altogether as one entire perfection; which, though it exerts itself in different ways and actions, and operates diversely, according to the diversities of its objects, and accordingly admits of different names, such as wisdom, goodness, justice, and mercy, yet is in itself *but one simple and indivisible principle of action.*"* The assumption appears to be that all God's attributes, being at one in his righteousness, may so far condition each other as to maintain a measurely and helpful working with each other. Where then shall we put the case of one totally blocking another, and refusing to allow a step of movement till it has gotten its complete satisfaction? And if justice may block the way of mercy, why may not mercy as properly block the way of justice? To say, in such a case, that both "are one simple and indivisible principle of action" does not appear to be very significant. What we call love does itself require justice to be done, in a certain contingency, because it is necessary to the fit maintenance of law, and the order and safety of God's kingdom. What we call mercy is agreed by all to be the natural behest of love. Justice and mercy there-

* Scott's Works, Vol. II., p. 204.

fore, both alike, are so far forms of love. Again the same is true of righteousness, or right—this requires both justice and mercy; for no being can ever think himself righteous, who does not exercise mercy where mercy is possible—"faithful and just" [righteous,] says an apostle "to forgive us our sins."* God will be just, retributively, because he is righteous. He will also be merciful and forgiving, because he is righteous.

In our own human judgments, we strike into this conception readily, however difficult it may be to find how the two are compatible. A distinguished English preacher, traveling in the country, is stopped by a highwayman demanding his purse. He descends composedly from his horse, and falling on his knees, offers a prayer for the guilty man, that he may be regained to a better mode of life. Rising he says—"Now go home with me and take the place I will give you in my family, never to be exposed, always to be cared for, there to win a character and be known from this time forth, God helping you, as a Christian man." The offer is accepted, the promise fulfilled, and the man is known from that time forth, as an example of fidelity and true piety towards God; only giving the story himself many years after, on the death of his benefactor. Has it ever occurred to any one that, in such benefaction, he was not a righteous man? Had he ever a scruple himself that he was not? Was he not also a man who, in a different case, where no such opportunity of mercy was left, would stand

A fact for illustration.

* 1 John i. 9.

firmly by the laws, and the rigid execution of justice? Did he ever even think to accuse himself, as being in the fault of laxity concerning justice? And yet he appears, when judged by the judicial analogies, to have become accessory after the fact, by concealing the crime committed; or if not accessory, to have been guilty of compounding a felony. What then shall we say of him, but that, being a simply righteous man, he thought of something juster than political justice; viz., to forgive, recover, and save?

Analogy in the correlation of forces.

Practically then, however we may speculate on the subject, we have no difficulty in allowing the compatibility of justice and mercy, and regarding them rather as complementary than contrary, one to the other. May we not even suspect that it is with them, much as it is in what is now called "the correlation of forces?" They seem indeed to be, and in fact really are, very different one from the other—what can be more unlike in one view, than the severities of God's justice, and the benignities of his mercy?—and yet, as we are shown that motion is heat or convertible into it, and heat into motion, and both into light, and all into chemical affinity, and as all these forces, externally viewed so very unlike, are even radically one and the same, it should not be difficult to allow that the antagonism of these coördinate factors in religion, so greatly magnified hitherto, is after all a case of identity rather—not of identity in the experience, but of identity in the root and causative force in which they spring. Is there not as good reason

to imagine that motion is hurrying away from light, and light pitching into chemical affinity, and this using up the heat of the planet so that by and by the stability and habitable order of it will be gone? and should we not set ourselves, in the same way, to find how the Creator is going to make compensations to the forces, for the losses they suffer from each other? And yet behold no single pennyweight is lost, for all the forces are one!

On the whole this matter of a contrived compensation to justice, which so many take for a gospel, appears to me to contain about the worst reflection upon God's justice that could be stated, without some great offense against reverence; for in whatever manner the compensation, or judical satisfaction, is conceived to be made, in the suffering of Christ, we shall find every thing pushed off the basis of truth. The justice satisfied is satisfied with injustice! the forgiveness prepared is forgiveness on the score of pay! the judgment-day award disclaims the fact of forgiveness after payment made, and even refuses to be satisfied, taking payment again! What meantime has become of the penalties threatened, and where is the truth of the law? The penalties threatened, as against wrong-doers, are not to be executed on them, because they have been executed on a right-doer! viz., Christ. And it is only in some logically formal, or theologically fictitious, sense, that they are executed even on him. Many of the best teachers, it is true, have maintained that God's threatenings do

Compensation theories issued in mock truths.

not amount to a pledge of his veracity;* and it is very true that no one will complain of any lack of veracity, in the fact that they are not executed against him, as he might where a promise of good is not fulfilled in his favor. Still there is obviously something due to God's dignity in the matter. Allowing that, in some given case, he might safely do better by a transgressor than to execute the threatened penalty, it is very plain that an attempt to rule in the general, by a mere vaporing of penalty, or by penalties always to be remitted, would indicate a want of system and magistrative firmness, too closely resembled to a want of truth, to allow any solid title to respect.

If it should be objected that as much defect of truth is implied in the mitigations of law and justice, under the plan I have sketched, it is enough to answer that no mitigations are made which were not implicitly understood in the verbal threatenings themselves. These threatenings only declared in general what the grand causalities of justice were bringing to pass, acting by themselves; and the specific variations to be issued by the interactions of mercy show no abandonment of justice, and support no charge of discrepancy, as long as the retributive causalities continue under their naturally immutable laws. First there is a natural order of justice, then there is a supernatural order of mercy interacting with it. And the working of the two is so difficult to be traced, so complex in its modes and issues, that no judicial sanction could be verbally stated, that

* Discourses and Treatises by Dr. Park. Introductory Essay, p. 16.

is more exact or closer to the truth of justice, than that which is in fact asserted in the penalties denounced. Why then should any fault of truth be felt, when there is no vaporing *in terrorem*, or shuffling in contraries, but only a regular going on of justice and mercy —the natural order and the supernatural—moving with locked hands, sometimes issuing a deliverance, and sometimes a finality of retribution; neither, at all, violating the other as an everlasting and fixed ordinance, and both even helping each other into a range of dignity and power otherwise unattainable. The forgivenesses promised are not emptied of sound reality as such, by the fact that they are legally paid for. The perils of justice are the real perils of real justice, not of justice satisfied. What mercy can do, and what justice will, is clear as the nature of both; for both stand fast together, as they have eternally, in God's unchangeable righteousness.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LAW PRECEPT DULY SANCTIFIED.

THE doctrine of the chapter just concluded supersedes, it will be observed, all those compensational contrivances for the saving of God's justice, which have been the labor of theology under this head of atonement; showing how justice and mercy are factors in God's plan working safely together, and are complementary in part to each other by reason of the antagonism of their functions; showing also how, by this same qualified antagonism, the order of God's plan is made sure, and his ends of government accomplished. This I believe to be the doctrine of scripture and, of course, to be true. Still it is a kind of truth that requires time and reflection, and is not likely to approve itself generally at once. Having therefore given it forth to work suggestively, and finally to approve itself, I consent to waive it, and go on with my argument, by another course that is separate and is no way dependent on it.

Holding now in view the same particular apprehensions of damage, from the introduction of forgiveness and free justification, that were mentioned in the close of the second chapter, I propose, in this and the two fol-

lowing chapters, to go over them in order, and show that the said grounds of apprehended damage do not exist; or that, if they might exist, they are adequately provided against. I do not say that they are provided against by any strictly compensative arrangements, though I shall bring forward and specify things which others may take as compensatory, in respect to law and justice, if they choose.

We shall be discussing, in these chapters, what many take for the whole subject; viz., the ground of forgiveness; but as this, in the view I am giving, is no real subject at all, I do not propose the matter to be investigated in that form. I propose rather to inquire what is the working of forgiveness itself, as accomplished by the Moral Power of Christ in his Sacrifice? It appears to be supposed that forgiveness is a mere letting go of the guilty, just as a man who has been injured by another lets him go, consentingly, without further blame. But there is this very immense difference, if we will not be deceived by the most superficial notion possible, between our letting go of an adversary and God's, that, while our adversary is wholly quit of our impeachment, God's is really bound fast in the chains of justice and penal causation, and held as fixedly in their fires, after he is let go, as before. Merely telling him that he is forgiven signifies nothing, even though it be by a voice from heaven. He must *be* forgiven, the forgiveness must be executed, by an inward change that takes him out of his bondages, and the hell of penal causations loosed by his sin, and brings him forth into the liberties of

love and adoption. This will be effected by the grace of Christ in his vicarious sacrifice. And then the question follows, how the forgiveness, the real deliverance accomplished by him, may consist with the precept, and the enforcements of law, and the rectoral justice of God? No *ground* of forgiveness is wanted; but only that the forgiveness itself be executed in a way to save all the great interests of eternal authority and government.

The first named ground of apprehension is, that the law precept may seem to be loosely held and fall into practical dishonor. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.

I turn the question here, as regards the precept of the law, upon the particular word *honor;* partly because it is historical, being a favorite word of Anselm for such uses; and partly because there is no other word so appropriate. Sin dishonors the law, breaks it down, tramples it in customary contempt, raises a feeling of disrespect in mankind strong enough to be itself called the law of this world. Hence the necessity of punishment, which is that self-asserting act of God, in its behalf, by which he invests it with honor. For it must be remembered here, that we are not looking for some scheme of penal substitution, compensation, satisfaction, but are, in fact, discussing the great question how it is that God forgives; or, what is the same, accomplishes the restoration of fallen character? Where it is coming out, that he gets a great part of this power, not by his

The sacrifice saves the honors of the law precept.

mere love and suffering patience and divine sympathy in Christ, but also in part by the invigoration of law and its moral impressions. A very small matter it will be in this view, that he manages to just save the law by some judicial compensation—he does infinitely more, he intensifies and deepens the impression of law, to such a degree that it comes out reënacted, as it were, to be fulfilled in a higher key of observance.

To make this very important fact apparent, attention is called to four distinct points of view, in which Christ, by his sacrifice, magnifies, if I should not rather say glorifies, the precept of the law.

I. He restores men to the precept. If there were no instituted law, none but the law before government, there would be no doubt of this. But the instituted law goes by enforcement, and is honored because of the enforcement; how then can it be honored in a loss of the same, that is in forgiveness? Because, I answer, the subject forgiven is restored to all precept; not to the Right or Precept Absolute only, but impliedly to all the statutes of God's instituted government, for the application and the enforced sanction of that. No matter then if the forgiven soul is taken clean by the sanctions, to think only of precept. All the more and not the less does he honor it, that he is brought into a love of it, and of God by whom it is enforced, such that his obedience becomes an inspiration. We may even say that he is released from the law wherein he was held; but we only mean

Christ restores to the precept.

that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him, by the free assent of his liberty, outrunning all enforcement. If then Christ restores to such a noble conformity, raising the whole stature of life and quality of being in them that are restored, how can it be said that the precept of the law is made void or put in dishonor? Is it any more dishonored, or made void, in the case of such as are not, and will not be, restored? Has any remission been extended to them? Just contrary to that, they are going to be made responsible in fact and in strict justice, for their contempt and rejection, not of the precept only but of the great mercy tendered them, to help their recovery into it.

On the whole, there appears to be no single point where any loss of honor can be imagined, as far as the precept is concerned. Christ beholds it from the first moment onward, doing nothing and wanting nothing, in all the immense travail of his incarnate ministry and death, but to commend the Righteousness and Beauty of it, and regain lost men to that homage which is at once their own blessedness and its everlasting honor.

Christ reasserts and establishes the law itself.

II. Christ honors the precept, not only in what he does for our sake, in restoring us to it and forgiving us in it, but quite as much in what he does for its sake, to restore and save it also. For how shall he so magnify the law, as by setting it on high, enthroning it in love, organizing in it a kingdom worthy of its breadth, beneficence, dignity, and all-encompassing order? We

often magnify Christ's work as being a work of salvation for men, because it is in this view that it makes an appeal so persuasive to human feeling; but there is nothing he would spurn himself, with a more total disallowance, than the thought of a salvation gotten up for men, one side of the grand, everlasting law, in which God's empire stands. We greatly mistake, if we think that Christ is doing every thing here, as prosecuting a suit before human feeling, and to bring human souls out of trouble; he wants to bring them into righteousness; and that again, not for their sakes only, but a great deal more for righteousness' sake; to heal the elemental war, and settle everlasting order, in that good law which is the inherent principle of order.

What meaning there may be in this ought, henceforth, to be never a secret to our American people. In our four years of dreadful civil war, what immense sacrifices of blood and treasure have we made; refusing to be weakened by sorrow, or shaken by discouragement, or even to be slackened by unexpected years of delay. Failure was prophesied on every hand; compositions were proposed without number. Yet nothing could meet our feeling but to save the integrity of our institutions, and forever establish the broken order of the law. All the stress of our gigantic effort hinged on this and this alone. No composition could be endured, or even thought of, that did not settle us in obedience, and pacify us in the sovereignty of law; and, to the more rational of us, nothing appeared to lay a sufficiently firm basis of order, but the clearance somehow

of that which has been the mockery of our principles, and the ferment even, from the first, of our discord. The victory we sighed for, and the salvation we sought, were summed up in the victory and salvation of law. Failing in this every thing would be lost. Succeeding in this all sacrifice was cheap, even that of our first-born.

What now do we see in the sacrifice of Christ, but that he, only in a vastly higher and more grandly heroic devotion of his life, is doing all for the violated honor and broken sovereignty of law. He proposes, indeed, to be a Saviour to men; but the gist of the salvation, both to us and to him, is that heaven's original order is to be restored in us, and made solid and glorious, in the crowning of God's instituted government forever. Every thing that we see therefore, in the incarnate life and suffering death, is God magnifying the honors of his law by the stress of his own stupendous sacrifice. Such an amount of feeling, put into the governmental order, commends it to our feeling; and also turns our feeling into awe before it. The law is raised as precept, in this manner, to a new pitch of honor, and the power of impression given to it, by the vicarious sacrifice and more than mortal heroism of Jesus, is the principal cause of that immense progress in moral sensibility and opinion, that distinguishes the Christian populations of the world. What they so much feel and have coming in upon their moral sensibility, in ways so piercing, is the law of duty, glorified by suffering and the visibly divine sacrifice of the cross.

III. Christ adds authority and honor to the law-precept, as being, in his own person, the incarnation of it. In itself, what we call law is impersonal, a cold mandatory of abstraction. Its authority, as such, is the conviction it is able to produce of its own imperative right. An additional honor and authority is given it also, when God reaffirms it, and from the point of his invisible majesty, assumes the maintenance of it. A certain authority is gained for it also by impressive circumstance, when it is delivered from the thundering and smoking mountain top. By the cold intimidation of such a pronouncement, it even becomes appalling; it makes the people quake and shiver. Still the coldness and the stern decretive majesty partly benumb conviction. To have its full authority felt, it must be brought nigh in its true geniality and warmth, as a gift to the higher nature of souls; exactly as it is, when it is incarnated and made personal in Christ, addressing human conviction by his human voice. For Christ is not, as many seem to fancy, a mere half-character of God incarnate, a kind of incarnate weakness in the figure of a love-principle, separated from every thing else in God's greatness, necessary to the tonic vigor of love. Being the incarnation of God, the full round character of God as he is must be included—authority, justice, purity, truth, forgiveness, gentleness, suffering love, all excellence. All these, in fact, belong to God's character, and they are here brought nigh, brought into concrete expression, thus to be entered, by Christ, as a complete moral

He is himself the incarnation of the precept.

power, into souls. They work all together, in his charities, in his miracles, in his doctrine, in his death, resurgent with him, as it were, when he rises and goes up on high, there to assume the kingdom with him and to judge the worlds. Hence the remarkable authority that is felt to be somehow embodied in him, even from the first. There is really more of authority for the precept of law, in the fifth chapter of Matthew, than there is in the whole five books of Moses; nay, there is more in his simple beatitudes themselves. For moral ideas and the claims of duty under God, are brought specially nigh, when spoken thus, out of human feeling, to the living sensibility and conscious want of human hearts. Scarcely necessary was it for him to add, that no jot or tittle of the law should fail; still less, when the mysterious authority of his manner and person were always enforcing the same impression. He spake with authority, they said, and not as the Scribes; "never man spake like this man." His simple definition, or summation of law—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—seemed, to the captious scribe, a kind of second giving of the law, so divinely impressive was the manner, and he durst not question farther. Nothing could be more natural; for, in his person, not the love only, but the law, nay, the instituted govern ment of God itself is incarnated and become a person. It is seen when he is looked upon, heard when he

speaks. What then shall be so felt as the authority of his manner? How else shall law, too, get a presence so majestic in the world, as when it thus becomes the good, great King of promise—Immanuel—Messiah? But these are all inferior and scarcely more than accessory arguments; the principal remains to be added which is this—

IV. The almost inconceivable honor Christ confers on the law precept, in the fact that his incarnation, life, and death upon the cross—all that I have included in his vicarious sacrifice—are the fruit of his own free homage and eternally acknowledged obligation to the law; in one word his deific obedience.

His life and death are his obedience to law.

I have spoken of the law before government, the eternal absolute law of right. Under it, and by it, as existing in logical order before God's perfections, even they, as we found reason to believe, have their spring. It was not necessary here to go into any very elaborate argument; for it can not escape the discovery of any one, that if God has moral perfections of any kind, they must have a standard law, and obtain their quality of merit, by their fulfillment of that law. Of course there is no precedence of time in the law, as compared with the date of God's perfections, but there must be a precedence of order, and the law must be obligatory in that precedence. But we come now to a matter which, to most minds, will be more remote and more difficult; viz., to the fact, that God has not only a character ever-

lastingly perfected in right, but that, by the same law, he is held to a suffering goodness for his enemies, even to that particular work in time, which we call the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. Christ was, in this view, under obligation to be the redeemer he was; and fulfilling that obligation, he conferred an honor on the law fulfilled, such as could not be conferred by any stringency of justice laid upon the race itself. A point so remote from many, and yet of so great consequence, requires to be more carefully established.

The Law is Love and Love is Vicarious Sacrifice.

Consider and make due account then, of the fact, that the eternal law of right, which we can not well deny is the basis of God's perfections, and of all law human and divine, is only another conception of the law of love; and that, as the righteousness of God fulfills the Right, so it is declared that "God is Love," as being another equally valid conception of his eternal perfections. The two principles, right and love, appear to exactly measure each other. One is the law absolute, or ideal, commanding the soul, even if it were to exist in solitude; the other is the law relational, grounded on the sense of relationship to other beings, who may be socially affected by our acts. Thus every one who will be and do right, in the large and complete sense of the principle, will as certainly love all beings, whether God or men, whether friends or enemies, whether deserving or unworthy, with whom he finds himself in relation. The law of love appears to be, in some sense, a law of revelation, as the law of right is not. And yet the

law of love is just as truly grounded in nature, commands the assent of natural conviction just as invincibly, when it is once stated. The only reason why it is not propounded universally as a principle of natural morality, is that the close relationality of it is cross to our humanly selfish habit. We can talk of being right, and are willing to think of that as a duty, because we can put a lower, merely conventional, and market sense on the word, that accommodates our self-approbation; but we shrink from the law of love, and do not propose it in our schemes of ethics, because we do not consciously recognize and practically own the brotherhood of other beings. In a certain philanthropic and romantic way, we do it, but to have the law drawn close enough to put us under bonds of concern for them, and even of suffering and sacrifice for their sake, is not a kind of standard that we naturally propose. Very admirable and truly great is the example, when it is fulfilled; we are even quite melted in the tenderness it excites; but the goodness is too nearly superlative, the standard too high, and we look for some other in some lower key.

But this will not be the manner of God. Love to him is Right and Right to him is Love. And, as certainly as he is in this law of love, he will suffer the pains of love, he will go beyond all terms of mere justice or desert, yield up resentments, pass by wrongs already suffered, put himself in a way to receive the wrongs and bear the violence even of personal enemies, if he can hope to do

Christ fulfills eternal obligation.

them good with no counterbalancing injury. In a word, he will so insert himself into the miseries, and even into the guilt of their state, as to have them as a burden on his feeling, contriving, by whatever method, at whatever expense, to bring them relief. All this in eternal obligation. We do not commonly speak of God as a being under obligation, because, being transgressors ourselves, we associate some idea of constraint and even fear with obligation; yet what are God's moral perfections, but his mind's free homage to binding principles? And if the principles are not good enough to bind, what is the merit of their observance? God is of course amenable to no law, as prescribed by a superior—enough that he is freely, gloriously, amenable to law, in its own self-asserting majesty; that which, like himself, is eternal, that which he "possessed in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." Perhaps it is better not to say that he is *under* law, lest we associate some constraint, or limitation, but that he is *in* it, has it for the spring of his character and counsel, and so of his beatitude for ever. Even as Hooker eloquently says—"that law which hath been of God and with God everlastingly"—"it is laid up in the bosom of God."

God then does not make the law of love, or impose it upon us by his own mere will. It is with him as an eternal, necessary, immutable law, existing in logical order before his will, and commanding, in the right of its own excellence, his will and life. This being given, all his plans, decrees, creations, and executory statutes

are built to it, as the heavens by the eternal laws of geometry. And so, all government being cast in this mold, God is united to creatures, creatures to God and to each other, by this one common term, which interprets and unifies all. Were there any being, whether Creator, or creature, who had a different kind of law, prescribing a different kind of virtue, he would be unintelligible to the others, and practically unrelated to them. And his virtue, call it by whatever epithets of distinction, could not even pass the audit of a common respect and praise.

In this manner we are prepared for the conclusion and even brought down close upon it, that Christ came into the world, as the incarnate Word and Saviour of sinners, just because the eternal, necessary law of love made it obligatory in him to be such a Saviour. It is with him even as the apostle represents, when he says—"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." It is not commandment that he speaks of, but it is law, that same which rested on the divine nature and which Christ fulfilled in his sacrifice; that same in which he gave himself, for love's sake, even to death for malefactors and enemies. The essentially vicarious action of the love-principle and the manner in which it makes the want, or woe, or even sin, of others its own personal concern, I have sufficiently shown already,* but I find the point so finely conceived by Edwards, that I am tempted here to cite his language; only wishing that

The cross not optional but obligatory.

* Part I., Chapter I.

he could have seen the reach of what he is saying, as affording the only good and right solution of the substitution of Christ, or of the scripture expressions concerning it. "A strong exercise of love excites a lively idea of the objects beloved. And a strong exercise of pity excites a lively idea of the misery under which he pities them. Christ's love and pity fixed the idea of them in his mind, as if he had been really they, and fixed their calamity in his mind as though it had been really his. A very strong and lively love and pity towards the miserable tends to make their case ours; as, in other respects so in this, in particular, as it doth, in an idea, place us in their stead, under their misery, with a most lively, feeling sense of that misery; as it were feeling it for them, actually suffering it in their stead by strong sympathy."* Thus it was that Christ bore his burden as being under the eternal law of love, and so fulfilled it as to make it, in some really impressive sense, his law—"the law of Christ."

The substitutional action of love perceived by Edwards.

There was no constraint in the obligation, it is true; the more wonderful therefore is the grace of the obedience that is yielded so freely. And of course the obligation, when we thus speak, is not any obligation due to us. We had no claims to lay upon him, any more than our enemy has a claim upon us, that we shall sacrifice our peace, or life, to his benefit. It was simply obligation to the grand, everlasting, essentially vicarious principle of love, an obligation to be gracious, and

* Edwards' Miscellaneous Observations, p. 5.

do by his disobedient subjects, since he could well do it, better than they deserve; which if he could not consent to, he must be quite another and less approvable character before the standards of his own perfect mind. There is nothing optional, as many conceive in his sacrifice. He could renounce it, only as he could the honors of his own perfect character. In it he is just as good as he is in obligation to be. If better, then either he is better than he should be, or the law less good than it ought to be. Whereas it is the exact merit, the glory of both, that they punctually meet in the utmost limit of good.

Anselm and Bellamy.

The conception of some such obligation, or obedience to obligation, in the work and sacrifice of Christ, has been more or less nearly approached by many. Thus Anselm, while conceiving that Christ undertakes the work at his option, still imagines a kind of obligation *post* requiring it of God himself. "Does not the reason why God ought to do the things we speak of seem absolute enough, when we consider that the human race, that work of his so very precious, was wholly ruined, and that it was not seemly that the purpose which God had in man should fall to the ground?"* Bellamy also conceives that God, in requiring perfect obedience of man as the condition of his well-being, even carefully squared his own action by the golden rule, in a way of volunteer allegiance to it, saying, "I did as well by mankind, as I should desire to have been done by myself, had I been

* Cur Deus Homo, Lib. 1., Cap. iv

in their case and they in mine; for when my Son, who is as myself, came to stand in their place, I required the same of him."*

But there is another version of the obedience of Christ—the same which is indicated in these last words —which requires our attention. Thus many, giving to certain words of scripture a meaning favored by their most superficial acceptation, look upon it never as the obedience of God himself to the eternal, necessary law, but as being that of a certain second person, who is somehow other and not God, contributed by him to God for sinners. Obtaining thus a peculiar merit by his suffering obedience, the second person, they conceive, is able to pay the first for the letting go of their punishment. And they quote, as authority for this, all the texts that speak of Christ as being sent, or commanded by the Father, as doing his will, as obedient unto death, for the Father's reward. As if one person of the Trinity, putting another under command, and sending him into the world to suffer and die for sin, were any permissible account either of the Trinity, or of the suffering. Why must we take hold of words in this manner, without considering at all the conditions of the subject matter? The Father is above, representing the eternal government; the Son is a man below, acting, so far, under and obeying that government. But in another, wholly consistent view, he is, in his human person, the express image and outward type of

The obedience of Christ to the Father, his obedience to law.

* Vol. 1., p. 259.

what is most intense and deepest in the character and action of God himself; representing, in what is called his obedience to the Father, the everlasting obedience of the whole divine nature to the ideal, fundamental law. Thus when he testifies—"I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me"—"as the Father gave me commandment so I do," he is to be understood just as he is when he says—"the Father is greater than I;" that is, not as declaring his literal inferiority, and his subjection as the eternal Son, or second person, to the Father's mandates, but as speaking for the human state he is in, and refusing to be made an idol of in his human figure. He is only saying, do not stop at me, and localize God quantitively in me, when he is only in me, as being expressed by me. Let your thought begin at me, and then, counting me one with the Father, in what you have discovered by me, let it travel up and crown itself in him. Having gotten out of me the feeling and character of the God invisible, count that having seen me "ye have seen the Father that sent me;" that, in what I have called my obedience to Him, ye have seen that everlasting obedience to law, which is the essence and soul of his perfections. Let your homage therefore be to Him, as the God above limitation, discovered to your love in and by limitation.

In this manner, Christ is always contriving to carry men's thoughts above, or up through, his humanity, and forbid their coming to a period of stunted measurement in his human person. He takes the subject state,

doing and showing every thing in and by that state, and then, referring it back to that unseen sovereign state of which it is the representation. Any other conception of the matter, such as puts the Son literally under the tutelage and authority of the Father, is a superstition put for doctrine, and not any rational belief. God is three in no such sense that he is not one; least of all is he three, in any such sense, that he has relations of authority and subjection in his threeness. The obedience of Christ, then, represents just that which we have seen to be included in God's moral perfection, or righteousness; viz., the everlasting obedience of his nature to the law of right, or of love. Nay, if we will let our plummet down to the bottom of this great sea, the cross of Jesus represents and reveals the tremendous cross that is hid in the bosom of God's love and life from eternity.

The immense honor paid to the Law by Christ's obedience.

It is obvious enough that, in such a way of obedience, Christ makes a contribution of honor to the law he obeys, that will do more to enthrone it in our reverence, than all the desecrations of sin have done to pluck it down —more too, than all conceivable punishments, to make it felt and keep it in respect. The grand evil of sin is that it tramples law and brings it into contempt. Many, too, apprehend danger from the full remission of sin, lest it should leave the law trampled and without vindication, and reveal a kind of indifference to it in God, that will be fatal to all due impressions of its authority and sanctity. Here then.

over against all such damages and apprehended mischiefs of laxity, we now place the momentous, grandly impressive fact of Christ's obedience—his obedience unto death—taken as an exhibition of God's eternal homage to law, and of the cross of sacrifice by which his feeling and will are everlastingly bowed to the burdens of pity and suffering. Even as Christ himself conceives the representative nature of his whole life, when he says—"I have glorified thee on the earth."

Compensation enough were compensation wanted.

Now I do not undertake to show, be it observed, that Christ came into the world, in a plan to set his obedience over against the damages and debts of sins; or that he came to fill out any scheme of satisfaction, or compensation. If any thing is wanting to compensate the loss of punishment, it will be enough that the very things suffered and done to make the forgiveness an executed fact, give back greater honors to the law than are lost by the loss of punishment. No, Christ came just because the law he had been in from eternity sent him, and his incarnate appearing was but the necessary outcoming in time of God's eternal Love. He descended to the lot of men just because he had them in his heart. His object was only to minister. His compassions, even before he came, were tinged all through with sorrowing tenderness. His emotional nature was stung and wounded every day, after he came, by the scenes of wrong and cruelty he was compelled to look upon, the sicknesses, and pains, and deaths, and torments of spiritual disorder to which he ministered.

The storms of the world's madness gathered round him in his work, and the inward storms of mental agony rolled heavily over him sometimes in his private hours. But his effort was to simply fulfill such a ministry to lost men as would gain them back to God and eternal life. He strove, in particular, by his teachings, healings, sympathies, and the impressions of his personal suffering, to inaugurate a new and more adequate moral power by his ministry; so to get hold of their moral convictions, so to work on their guiltiness, by the due manifestation of God, and his love, as to even regenerate their character. And doing all this, going even to the cross for love's sake, in a perfectly simple devotion, what will more certainly follow than that even the law thus gloriously fulfilled in his ministry, is itself raised into power by the honor he confers upon it? Every thing gets a moral power that he touches, or looks upon—the Jordan, that he went down into it; Nazareth, that it saw his childhood; Capernaum, that it heard his first sermon; the waters of Gennesaret, that they floated his boat and settled into peace under his word. Nay, if we could find it, even the rock of the mountain that supported his head in the sleep of his solitary night, would have itself a sacred power from his person. Why not then the law, that which he had with him before the world was, that which he taught so convincingly, that which he fulfilled by so many exhaustive labors, and by sorrowing even unto death?

Grant that here is no contrived compensation to

law, is it any the less truly compensated, any the less sacred, and honorable, and powerful on a lost world's feeling, that he has glorified it forever in their sight by his simple obedience? Whatever we may say or think of the matter of judicial compensation, as a purpose to be answered by his death, he could not be ignorant that the highest possible honor would be imparted to the law by his obedience to it; still it does not appear that even this was any principal end of his engagement. His principal end was in the sacrifice itself; viz., in the fulfilling and bringing forth of God's love to men, and the organizing of God's kingdom among them, by his glorious, world-transforming power. In this he did not fail, and it is only affirming a very subordinate matter, to say that his power, which came out of the law, came back also upon it, and made it a greater power than either the obedience, or the punishment of all past ages could.

As regards the degree of honor thus conferred by his obedience on the law, two points need especially to be observed. First, that the law fulfilled by his vicarious love and ministry, was exactly the same that our sin had cast off and desecrated—this it was that put the lost world upon his feeling, proved its goodness in his goodness, shaped the beauty of his beauty, travailed for us in his agony, and held him to the obedience even unto death. So the violated law comes back upon us to overwhelm us by showing us, in Christ, just what goodness was in it. Secondly that,

The very law dishonored organizes the redemption.

in this suffering and sacrifice of Jesus, there was nothing new, but only a new revelation of that which was old as the perfections of God. As a new waking up of feeling in deity, always before impassible, it would be a fact too violent for belief. Contrary to this, it is but the letting out of God's feeling, that could get no such sufficient vent of evidence before. This same agony and passion heaved in the breast of God's virtue, even from before the world's foundations. God was suffering in feeling for the ages to be, even before the evil was. In his counsel of creation he could not think of wrong, and disorder, and pain breaking loose, without being exercised for it according to its nature. There was a losing side of pain, in his goodness, just because it was good; only the loss was never a true loss, because it was eternally repaid by the willingness to lose for love's sake. The Gethsemane of his compassions kept company with his joys, and the conscious goodness of one was high enough to exalt the conscious bliss of the other. All this now appears, in the specially human facts of Christ and his passion. The law that was being thus sublimely fulfilled, in God's suffering love from eternity, is only now fulfilled to human view, by the suffering ministry of Jesus. No such revelation was made, or could be, in the field of nature before. Scantily and feebly was it made, so as to just glimmer and nothing more, in the word of the ancient prophets, and the guesses of the ancient saints. Now it is out in the full, revealed in time—God is in the world in love, fulfilling his eternal law Himself, for the saving of its rejectors.

But there are two objections to be noticed. The first is that which is actually, yet accidentally, stated by Mr Burge, without any conception of its applicability to the case here occurring. He says *—"In his divine nature, therefore, he could not have rendered precisely that obedience which man failed to render. Neither can it be supposed that in his divine nature, when he was incarnate, he obeyed the divine law, in any sense different from that in which God obeyed it from eternity. It is not seen, therefore, how Christ's obedience to the law could manifest God's regard for holiness, on account of his union of the divine and human natures, any more than if no such union had existed." Most true it is that he did not obey the law in any sense different from that in which God had obeyed it from eternity. But the inference that nothing is shown by his obedience, more than was shown by the eternal obedience, is just as good as it would be to argue that, manifesting nothing of God's love in his death, more than was in God's love before, it is therefore nugatory. The glory of his incarnate mission is precisely this, and in this is the gain of it, that he unbosoms, in time, what love and obedience to law were hid in God's unseen majesty, or but dimly and feebly shown before.

Objected that the obedience was nothing new.

The second objection referred to is that in such use of the obedience of Christ, conceived to be a simple fulfillment of his obligation, we get no surplus merit to be our righteousness. By a very strange, almost in

* Discourses and Treatises by Dr. Park, p. 475.

credible mock refinement, the sacrifice of Christ is dissected by the prominent satisfaction theories, just between the passive and the active, the suffering and the obedience; the suffering being put to our account with justice and called our atonement, and the obedience taken as a positive fulfillment of the law, and assigned to us for a righteousness. I can hardly trust myself to speak of this wretched imposture of science, falsely so called, as it deserves. It is a halving, as it were, of Christ and his sacrifice, that makes both halves alike of non-effect. Of what worth is the suffering, taken as mere suffering, with no obedience or moral quality in it? Of what worth, too, is the obedience, considered as having suffered nothing, proved itself by nothing, and even missed the prime attribute of reality? Is God a being who wants suffering by itself, and will have it from no matter whom? Is he a being who can make a righteousness for us quantitatively out of another's obedience, and be himself pleased with the impossible fiction? O how different a matter is the sublime obedience of Jesus—obedience unto death, death as the seal of obedience—covering the law thus with its original honor and breathing God's everlasting love into our fallen desecrated nature! This is gospel—possible truth, and good enough and great enough to be true. Whoever turns it, therefore, into wood and hay may be ingenious, but he will have scarcely less to answer for in his doctrine, I seriously fear, than others have in their sin.

Objected that, in such use of the obedience, no surplus merit is left for us.

Reviewing now the ground over which we have passed, I think it will be seen that Christ has set the law precept in a position of great honor and power, enduing it with such life and majesty, in men's convictions, as it otherwise never could have had. (1.) He proposes, we have seen, no remission of sins which does not include a full recovery to the law. (2.) All that he does and suffers in his sacrifice, he as truly does for the resanctification of the law as for our recovery. (3.) In his incarnation, he incarnates the same, and brings it nigh to men's feelings and convictions, by the personal footing he gains for it in humanity. (4.) He honors it again by his obedience, which is, in fact, a revelation of God's own everlasting obedience, before the eyes of mankind; the grandest fact of human knowledge. With great confidence then I state the conclusion, that the law precept is safe, established in power, crowned with invincible honor. Whatever may be thought, or apprehended, in respect to the possible damage accruing to God's law, as regards the matter of enforcement, when the remission of penalty is proclaimed, there can be no misgiving, in respect to the integrity and sanctity of the requirement. Whether there is any proper ground of concern for the loss of the penal enforcements, will be considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

LEGAL ENFORCEMENTS NOT DIMINISHED.

THE common assumption, that law is absurd or impossible without penal enforcements, is not quite true, or is only true in a given case or condition. God himself acknowledges law even from eternity, though it has to Him no sanction over and above its own excellence. All upright beings do the same. Indeed a law propounded with a penalty, to a realm in perfect holiness, would even be an impropriety, or blamable offense to their feeling. Not so, when propounded to minds no longer capable of being swayed by the authority of beauty and excellence in their own right. For it is the misery and shame of bad minds under sin, that excellence and beauty, powerful as they still are over the sentiments of their higher nature not yet extirpated, are no longer sufficient, by themselves, to recover and restore the broken homage of their fall. They move on a point, too far above the plane of motivity occupied by sin, to control and subdue it. They are likely indeed, when embodied in Christ, to be felt more as a disturbance, than as an attraction. What is wanted therefore, in connection with his new salvation, is some

Legal penal enforcements necessary for bad minds.

John the Baptist going before, to prepare his way. The new moral power wants a force-power to precede; something which meets the selfishness of sin in its own plane, making the appeal, at first, to interest or precautionary prudence, by intimidations and appeals to fear. To have approving sentiments raised for law in the bosom of transgression, and so to have it kept in reverence, is highly important, or even necessary, but there is wanted, beside, a more rugged sort of argument, that of strong penal enforcements; such as may cut off delays, stop the idle debates of the head, and raise a point-blank issue with pride and willfulness that, being an issue of peril, can not be parried.

To be more exact, we have proposed for us, at this point, two distinct schemes of motivity, neither of which is properly and fully Christian; first, the scheme that makes nothing of fear, and the lower motives addressed to prudence, counting wholly on such as lie in the ideal goodness and beauty of holiness itself; and secondly, the scheme which, finding natural causes arranged for the penal chastisement of wrong, counts the arrangement a complete moral government in itself, beside which no other is wanted, or in fact exists.

The former scheme assumes that goodness and right are their own argument, able to rule by their own simple excellence. What is good for angels in their height of virtue, is declared to be good also for men in their sin. At any rate, as the argument goes, nothing less, or lower, is permissible any where; for

False assumption that goodness is government enough.

what kind of excellence, or virtue is that, which is goaded by the impulsions of fear and threatened force? If any such thing is thought of, in this scheme, as conversion, the assumption is that evil will let go evil, and turn itself to good, simply for goodness' sake, without any thought or motive met in its own plane to dislodge it. Christ is more practical, and just as much more rational. He does not look on the world as being in a state to be converted romantically, as by the mere attractions of goodness and beauty. A beginning is to be made, he clearly sees, with sin, at its own level; the level of guilty apprehension, fear, selfishly interested forecast of the future. His first thought is to block the way of transgression, by warnings and appeals of terror. Setting the gate of God's mercy and truth wide open, he does not expect the transgressors to enter, just because he sits there, in the lovely charms of goodness. He expects them to come in, only as he compels them to come in; sending out the rugged sheriffalty of law and penal enforcement, to grapple them, as it were, by the shoulder. It is nothing to him that the first motives felt, in such a case, are too low for any state of virtue. Enough that, by guiltiness, want, fear, interested feeling, struggling with the dreadful and appalling problems of life, he is able to get them arrested in evil, and that, when the arrest is made, consideration begun, willfulness broken, the nobler motives of admiring sentiment—love, beauty, sacrifice—may come into play, and work their captivating spells of goodness on the heart's devotion. No

delicate philosophy detains him; if the lower motives appealed to are not fine enough for goodness, they are, at least, coarse enough for badness—just the fit evils to put in the way of evil, just the arguments it is able to feel, when it can be reached by nothing else. And so, by this very practical regimen, he is able to balk the progress of transgression, turn back the soul on thoughtfulness, so on repentance, so on the love of goodness and excellence for their own sake. And this to him more emphatically than to any other teacher of the world, is the only real state of virtue—dear to him specially in the fact, that, in being perfected as love, it casteth out the fear, in whose guilty intimidations it found the opportunity and date of its own beginning.

Thus it is that Christ, recognizing the fears as an original and profoundly rational function of souls, makes no scruple of appeal to them, even when his object is to consummate a character wholly superior to their active sway. He believes, we shall see, in strong penal enforcements, and puts them forward, clear of all delicate misgiving, to be the advance-guard of his mercies.

The second scheme referred to holds a humbler key; it is wholly in the plane of prudence and natural retribution; delighting in the discovery that, according to the original outfit of life, the moral law, or law of responsible conduct, has a whole system or economy of causes put in company with it, to be its avengers and redress its violations. And this, it is conceived, is the complete account, or whole, of God's moral govern-

False assumption that retribution is government enough.

ment. What we call punishment is the natural correction of our evils. Every sin, they say, is sure to be overtaken by its penalty; no trial, or judge, or judgment-seat, is wanted, the culprit carries his own hells of punishment with him, and every transgression kindles its own fires. And so it is conceived that motives of fear, prudence, and actual suffering, are the only arguments of virtue; which, of course never rises above the control of such, and really wants no other. Salvation itself, if we are to use the term, consists in simply backing out of our wrongs, because we are scorched by justice, or will be, in them. Saying nothing of the very ignoble and mean quality of such virtue, it is plain as it need be, that such kind of enforcement by natural causes, taken by itself, and not as a base for the working of higher motives, makes inevitably the most hopeless, helpless, least enforced scheme of duty that can be conceived. The result of such a scheme is not any state of virtue, but a state of natural punition that is, without a peradventure, endless. For the penal causations take away, at once, the powers so to speak of obedience. When the soul breaks into sin, the laws of retribution begin forthwith to punish it, by throes of internal disorder, which no power of the will can stop. It is shaken out of equilibrium, out of the full natural possession of itself, out of its constitutional harmony, by the terrible recoil of its transgression. The passions, fears, convictions, sentiments, imaginations, are all set loose in a quarrel with each other, and the will can neither recompose the state of harmony, nor

the mind itself accurately conceive the internal re adjustments necessary to such harmony. The transgressor could as easily regather his money sown upon the Gulf Stream, as gather himself back out of the penal causations in which he is weltering. The penal disorders and breakages will propagate, indirectly, other disorders and breakages, and the motions of life itself will be only "the motions of sins," propagating more sins. Even as a broken engine can not mend itself by running, but will only thresh itself into a more complete wreck. Setting his will to obey, as being now corrected by suffering—and he can do nothing more—his will can as little tame the soul's wild turbulences, or quiet the mob of its internal commotions, as it could the public anarchy of an empire. The exact difficulty now is, in fact, that the natural retributions are stronger as disabilities, than as motives, and are therefore no enforcement at all.

Now it is the merit, I conceive, of Christianity, that, of these two schemes of motivity, it holds exactly neither; or perhaps I should rather say that it comprises both together; viz., a standard of divine excellence and beauty, drawing men to goodness by the moral attractions of goodness itself; and a grand economy of penal causations in nature, by which evil done is confronted with evil to be suffered, and is thus forced back, on the consideration of that blessed authority which ought to be loved for its own excellence. Only it is a matter of the highest consequence to add that, in comprising these

Christ combines both kinds of motivity.

two elements, Christianity holds them both with important additions, or variations, necessary to their effectiveness.

First, that the moral power of good, as expressed by the law, is to get an accession of moral power, in Christ, beyond that which naturally belongs to it as impersonal precept; for it is to be glorified and raised in power, by the miracle of the incarnation, and the sacrifice and supernatural ministry of Jesus. The moral power it gets in this way is to be itself a kind of supernatural person, invested with such life and feeling, by the methods of the cross, that, entering into natures disordered and broken by the penal retributions of sin, it may recompose them in heaven's order and harmony; so to be a true redemption. For it will redeem, in this manner, from the natural laws and causations arranged to serve as enforcements, and prevent these enforcements from issuing in results of eternal disability; as they otherwise would, in the manner just now stated. They were never intended, as retributions, to maintain a mere scheme of obedience by force—which is no obedience at all—but to work in with and toward this other and higher power, that is relatively supernatural, and brings the soul up finally out of their compulsions into a complete liberty in good.

First, by his moral power, he re-enforces the law.

Secondly, this being true, Christianity is able to press the enforcements on that side, with the greatest emphasis, and even to increase the responsibilities enforced. Taken as a scheme of retributive causations in nature,

they sleep, as it were, in silence, to be discovered only as they are provoked. But Christianity brings them all out, in the bold announcement of them by a doctrine. And to make them felt, it puts them forward in the shape of positive enactments, to be executed against the transgressors, by a positive judicial sentence. Furthermore it makes the rejection of Christ, and the supernatural grace prepared by him, a great part of the sin to be answered for—just as it must be, in fact, regarding natural causes as the sole agents of retribution; for the greater advantages, and helps, and revelations of goodness and beauty, sin rejects, the greater will be its criminality and the deeper hold of it the fires of natural retribution will, of course, take. In this manner Christianity presses enforcements up to their limit, placing its own great mercies and captivating charms of good always along-side of them, and allowing itself never to be detained by any delicate misgivings of philanthropy.

And so is able to enforce it by stronger penalties.

For there is no hardship now in severity; the hardest and sorest defect is really in the want of it. Taken by themselves, the penal sanctions of nature would be only a ministry of condemnation; they would kill and nothing more; now they condemn and slay to make ready for life; lifting their ominous flag of warning on the shoals of future wreck, to beckon the transgressor back on a revised consideration of his courses. Would it be a kindness if this flag were taken down?

It has been convenient, thus far, to speak of penal enforcements simply as compelling motives, or as warnings and intimidations addressed to prudential consideration. But they have a much deeper and more nearly basal office, which is commonly not observed. They have even a certain moral power in themselves, which is of a wholly different cast from that of Christ in the sacrifice, but which he contrives to unite with his own, by the sturdy severities of his doctrine. In our discussions, for example, of punishments in the civil state, and particularly of capital punishments, it appears to be taken for granted, that these two, the intimidation of crime, and the reclamation of the criminals themselves, are the only objects of penalty. Whereas the grandest, and most real, and deep-working office of punishment is the fearfully sharp sense it wakens of crime itself, by such tremendous severities or thunderclaps of extermination—wherein even the good, protective law can so utter itself and must, against the deeds of wrong that shake society. The moral conviction roused is the main benefit—that sensibility to order, and law, and right, that runs quivering through the bosom of all citizens, when the almost sacrilegious violence of justice turns upon the felon's life, commanding the scaffold and the rope to stop his breath! And precisely in the same way it is to be conceived, that strong and terrible retributions, not only serve as motive powers of interest in the government of souls, but have another and weightier office, in creating moral

The immense moral power of judicial severities.

sensibility, or setting in moral conviction, as regards the sanctity of law and the dreadful criminality of sin. Without this, no visitation of mere gentleness and suffering sacrifice will make a salvation that has the true efficacy. The very subsoil of guilt requires to be stirred by God's terrors. They must not simply skim the surfaces of fear, but strike through into the deep underwork of moral conviction itself. All the better too, if we behold the terrible thunder-strokes of Providential severity falling on the head of whole communities, or nations, or specially on the head of the most deserving peoples; because it visibly is now, not sins, but sin, not any special crimes, but the comprehensive criminality of a state unrelational with God, that requires or instigates so great severity. Hence, the great common woes that fall on whole peoples, in what are called the severities of nature—the storms, fires, earthquakes, pestilences, famines, wrecks, orphanages of the world—the unspeakably appalling facts are known, and they have no other solution that is either satisfactory or tolerably sufficient. The language of Christ, applying all such things to the common guilt of mankind, shows in what manner they were understood by him. "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffer such things? or those eighteen, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you nay, but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish."

It appears then that Christ, coming to us in his sacri-

fice, to unbosom the love of God, and publish the free forgiveness of sins, is fully awake, nevertheless, to the sacred necessity of maintaining law by adequate enforcements, and ploughing up moral conviction by great Providential and judicial severities. Only the more fit subject of wonder is it, therefore, that so many teachers are disturbed by their very unnecessary concern for what they call the law; imagining that a free remission may somehow kill the law and contriving even schemes of punition for the Son of God himself, that they may save it! As if the supernatural grace he brings, to rescue from the penal retributions of God, were quite taking away the enforcements; which it, in fact, only makes effective. Most strange it is that, when they are going every way to bring counsel from afar for the saving of law, they can yet see nothing in two such facts as these—continually reiterated by Christ himself—facts almost as new and distinctive even as the forgiveness of sins by his cross; (1.) eternal punishment; (2.) the judgment of the world by himself. Publishing announcements like these, and making even love to thunder, in motives so appalling, is it to be feared that Christ is letting down authority, and obliterating the fixed lines of duty, by some unguarded license of mercy? Why the law never before got itself really uttered, and the grand awards of the future life never showed their true figure of majesty, till they were revealed in this fearful way of emphasis by Christ himself. Accordingly, to these

Christ therefore denounces eternal punishment and assumes the judgment of the world.

two very remarkable points in the public teaching of Christ, considered as related to the enforcement of law, I now invite the reader's particular attention. And—

I. To the specially Christian declaration of future punishment, sometimes called eternal, or endless punishment.

I am well aware of the disappointment I may inflict on certain progressives, or disciples of the new gospel, that, in so free a handling of what is held by authority, I still give in to a doctrine of the future punishment that is so revolting to reason, and, as they will say, to thoughtful minds already so nearly outgrown. If they can allow any reason for the fact that does not imply a subserviency to prudential motives, let it be that I am thoroughly fixed in the purpose, and that on grounds of reason, never to make a gospel—either to have no gospel at all, or else to accept the gospel that is given me. I have been through all the questions, taken all the turns of doubt, suffered all the struggles of feeling in respect to this confessedly hard looking doctrine of future punishment; I have even learned, in these struggles, to pity the meagerness of any soul that has encountered no troubles and painful misgivings concerning it. Neither is this pity at all diminished but increased, rather, by the fact, that I am brought back finally to acquiesce in it myself, and even to look upon it as being probably a necessary factor of the Christian salvation. What else can we infer, when we find, as we shall by a little search, that our merciful Christ, he

that comes in love, and saves by the sacrifice of his life, is the first distinctly responsible promulgator of it himself?

But, before proceeding to show this fact, let us attend to some considerations in which the doctrine may be duly qualified and cleared of the severities, by which it is made unnecessarily shocking to many.

The word "eternal" not very decisive.

We could well enough allow that the epithet "eternal" [αἰώνιος] need not mean eternal, in the exact, speculative sense. It is of no great consequence, that we insist on it as a term of duration logically infinite. Enough that we receive it practically, as giving that *finality* to thought, beyond which there is, for us, nothing to be meditated farther. It is very true that the same epithet is used respecting the duration both of punishment and of blessedness—"These shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal"—but it is surmised by some, without any great violence, that as we get only the slenderest impressions any way of the state of suffering called eternal, the intent of Christ may only be to shove our thought over on that sea, and let us get the measures of it by our long, long voyage afterward; that the punishment is called eternal as the life, because it is the punishment of the eternal state, and is best apprehended here, when taken as a *practical finality* for the mind.

I make this concession, partly because I have no care to press the matter so far as to make a bad eternity

hang on the form of a word, and partly because it is sometimes argued, in the same way, that as the capacity and blessedness of the life are to be forever amplified by exercise, so also are the capacity and woe of the punishment. And this latter is almost certainly not true. It may even be argued, with a considerable show of evidence, that the immortality of the soul does not belong to its mere nature, but depends rather on the eternally imperishable nature of that on which it feeds—God, truth, duty, self-sacrifice, holiness—and that when it only knows and goes after the phantoms of condition, or of mere conventional and temporal good, it must finally die out, for the poverty of that soul-food which it takes for its life. What is sometimes called the doctrine of the annihilation, or literal destruction, of the wicked, is the same more coarsely conceived. A good many passages of Scripture, too, are cited for it, without any great show of violence; and a good many others, with only that common kind of violence which consists in taking literally what is figuratively given.

The certain reduction of the soul by sin.

Rejecting, however, this annihilation theory as, plainly enough, not being the doctrine of Scripture, we still do observe, as a matter of fact, in this present life, that souls under sin are not amplified by their experience in it, as they are by their experience in good. Gaining vigor, it may be, for a little while, they finally begin to shrink in quantity, losing out capacity for both character and the higher kinds of suffering; a fact in which

the scheme of purgatorial restorationism loses all show of evidence, or we may almost say of possibility. Every thing we see of sin, in the world of fact, shows it to be a desolating, extirpating power in souls; killing out, by degrees, even the faculties and possibilities of religion, and reducing, in that way, all the hopes and chances of restoration, down to the very last edge of life. Almost any thing, therefore, can be more easily believed, than that, dropping off that edge, with but half a nature left, transgressors are there to be converted and finally restored, by the mere smart of their pains—that which would distract their love-impulse if they had it, and can not do much to restore it if they have it not.

The higher powers extinguished, but not the soul.

But while this diminution of quantity in souls under sin is fatal, as it certainly is, to any hope of purgatorial recovery, it does not go the length of proving their extinction, but gives exactly the point of view that yields the least exaggerated and truest impression of the Scripture view of punishment. Thus we observe that, for a little while, the human faculties appear to be invigorated by the struggles of passion, or selfish ambition; but that shortly they begin to be inevitably wasted in quantity, narrowed in volume and capacity, so as finally to produce the impression, that their intensity—as in cunning, hatred, envy, policy, and avarice—is getting to be a kind of intensified littleness; a fire still hot, but running low in fuel, and sure to be as much less considerable in its energy, as the substantive quantities of

the soul are more diminished. So the wasting goes on doubtless hereafter as here, and the penal wear of bitterness and wrong continues. But it does not follow that the waste will operate a cessation of being, because there are faculties and powers not wasted. The memory is as faithful a recorder of what is bad, as it could be of what is good. The conscience, with its law of right, is not extirpated any more than the sense of time or space. The will is even confirmed by habit in a state of unsubduable capacity, and the will is the grand centralizing element of personality itself. The affinities for what is bad are as durable as they would be in good. The progressive diminution, therefore, is never to end in cessation, but may well be figured by the asymptote line, which, as the mathematicians will even demonstrate, has the remarkable distinction of forever approaching a certain curve even by a fixed law, yet never making coincidence with it. So, probably enough, it may be, and we may even take it as the true conception, that souls which have become only hacks of punishment, will forever continue in being, spinning along their lengths of mediocrity, intensified in points, but not enlarged, and having their eternity as the protracted opportunity of their moral insignificance and hopelessness. Under the grand organic law, that faculties not used, or badly misused, are finally extirpated, their religious nature is likely to be nearly, or quite gone by. All the Godward summits of being and thought—aspiration, susceptibility for good, the sense of moral beauty, the power of realization by faith—are de-

molished, and a coarse, hard nature only remains, graveled by low animosities, without great sentiments, and rising never into any look of altitude, save when it is raised by the vehemence of its passions. Even the suffering that is left is that of a nature tapering down to a diminished grade of feeling, or abject continuity of consciousness, that is only the more desolate that it can not utterly die.

Infinite punishment denied.

Holding this conception, we go clear, it will be seen, of that very shocking extravagance, which maintains the infinity of future punishment. Mere infinity of duration does not make the quantity infinite, as many so hastily assume; for, if there be a diminution of degree as there is an extension of time, the quantity will never exceed a given amount. So too, if the continuance be endless, not on the score of old sins long ago committed—the sins of the previous lifetime—but as being ordered to match, and measure, and punish, the continuance of new sins, freely committed and persistently adhered to, the eternal punishment so-called, may be only a stream of temporal retributions, appointed to match the stream of eternally recurring transgressions. As regards this matter of amount, or quantity, we can really have no very definite conceptions; for though the state of punishment be endless, we have no gauges of intensity that we can apply, and do not even know how far the continuance rests on the continuance of transgression.

At the same time, we do perfectly know, that the arguments often used to show that the punishment of sin

ought to be, and therefore must be, infinite, are groundless—carried by a practice on words that plays them into inferences not contained in their meaning. Thus it is argued that the law of God has infinite value, and that sin therefore, being a violation of it, must be an infinite evil, worthy of an infinite punishment. The constitution of our government, I reply, has very great value, but it does not follow that any particular man's treason, however bold, is in exactly the same measure of consequence. The physical universe is infinite, but it does not follow that any man's infringement of its laws is an infinite infringement. Sometimes the argument is, that every sin heads a train of consequences that is endless, and is therefore infinite, requiring an infinite punishment. So does every most common, or trivial act, bring on after it an endless train of consequences that otherwise would not have happened; no man goes to his breakfast without this result, but it does not follow that his breakfast was infinite. Sometimes the argument is, that since the law of God is the best law possible, he ought, in true justice, to make the strongest expression of attachment to it that is possible; therefore that he ought to inflict the strongest possible punishment for the breach of it. But that strongest possible may be only a finite, carefully moderated punishment; for if God were to lay his omnipotence into the severity of it, he would only shock the sensibility of the public world addressed, by a cruelty visibly monstrous, and the suffering inflicted would have no expression at all that belongs to punishment.

The sober and rational fact, then, as regards the matter of endless punishment, is, that it is a finite retribution, laid upon the head of finite sin, and graduated in a general way by the demerit of it. The suffering state which it produces is described in figures that raise an impression of great severity; and there is no reason to believe that, take them as we may, we shall at all exceed the just realization of their degree. They will profoundly shock us, indeed, if we take them literally, and yet, so very slow are we to imagine a condition of unseen spiritual suffering, that we shall not, even then, raise a conception of the real misery that is at all adequate. All the greater and more reasonably conceived misery will it be, if we make no doubt that God is ready, at any future point in the run of it, to embrace, in everlasting reconciliation, any truly repenting soul. I say not any regretful soul, but any soul that is heartily turned to a new and eternally righteous life. For this will be the keen, all-devouring misery, that, with so many regrets, there is so little repentance, or even power of it; that the nature, now but half a nature, halting, as it were, on its clumsy and paralytic members, finds not how to rise any more forever. Strong enough to suffer, and wicked enough to sin, the tendrils of adhesion to God are dead, and it can not fasten itself practically to his friendship. Goodness it remembers but can not sufficiently feel. All its struggles are but heavings of the lower nature—pains of defeat that are only proving, by experiment, their own perpetuity.

The retribution finite but naturally endless.

Assuming all these qualifications of measure and degree, there is nothing left in the matter of endless punishment, by which we can fitly be disturbed, except that it does not bring out the kingdom of God, in that one state of realized unity, and complete order, which we most naturally desire, and think to be worthiest of his greatness and sovereignty. It certainly would be more agreeable, if we could have this hope; and many are resolved to have it without Christ's permission, if they can not have it with. They even make it a point of merit, to seize this honor bravely for God, on their own responsibility, and for it, if they must, defy the Scripture. I think otherwise, and could even count it a much braver thing, to willingly be less brave, and despite of our natural longings for some issue of God's plan that is different, follow still the lead of the Master.

We come back now from this rather long excursion, where we have been trying to settle our conceptions of the nature of the future punishment, and of the qualifications that may save it from a look of excess, to consider the relation Christ assumes towards it, in his vicarious sacrifice, and the free justification of sins. Observe then—

1. That while he undertakes, in this manner, a universal remission of sin, or even to freely justify every penitent transgressor before God, he has never yet thought, as far as we can discover, that he is putting God's law and justice in jeopardy, or raising any kind of theologic objection, such as now disturbs the con-

cern of many he is here on any exclusively merciful errand; for though it is a signal distinction of his incarnate ministry, that he reveals the heart of God, and the dear cross hid in his love from eternity, he does not spare to reveal, as faithfully, His truth, and justice, and authority, and righteousness, and all that is required to fill out the majestic proportions of His character and government. He begins, thus, with the declaration that no jot, or tittle of the law shall fail; that no righteousness of scribe or pharisee shall be enough; and can not close his first sermon, without promulgating, several times over, the appalling doctrine of future punishment. This doctrine is quite as distinctively Christian as the forgiveness of sins. I do not, of course, imagine that the fact is new, but the doctrine is. The fact was in the law of natural retribution from the first, just as gravity was in the world before it was declared by science; for the penal disorders, once begun, are not reducible by us, and the trains of retributive causes started by transgression make up a series of propagations naturally endless. Besides, as we just now saw, the total disuse of the religious nature must, in a short time, extirpate all the higher powers and possibilities of religion. And when that is done, when the feasibility of the soul to good is gone by, what is left but a state of incapacity that is final?

Christ does not even imagine that by mercy he is weakening law.

Christ, then, brought forth into bold assertion, for the first time, the doctrine of eternal punishment; not

as creating the fact, but only as declaring that which lies in the simply natural causalities of retribution. Under the old dispensation the published sanctions of law were temporal, or, if they were such as must naturally run over the border of this life into the next, they were not so conceived or represented, and never, in fact, got their motive power in being so recognized. Indeed, the future life itself is not distinctly conceived as a fact in the early Scriptures. We can see it irresistibly asserted ourselves, in such facts as the translation of Enoch and Elijah, less distinctly in the visitations of angels, visibly felt but unspoken in the longings of good men; but the holiest and best of patriarchs and wisest of teachers still said nothing of it, drew no motives from it. Farther on, expressions begin to be dropped, that show the fact struggling into formal recognition. And yet we find the question still on hand, between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, at the time of Christ's coming, whether there is any such fact of a second existence beyond this life—so completely temporal had been the cast of God's moral government, practically, down to this time. And here it is that Christ, announced by John as coming to lay the axe to the root, and thoroughly purge his floor, and burn up all the chaffy hypocrisies of a mere lifetime sanctity, with unquenchable fire, breaks on the world in his distinct, unflinching, never qualified, oft repeated, variously conceived proclamation of eternal punishment. His most common way of phrasing the doctrine is derived,

Christ the first teacher of eternal punishment.

perhaps, from the destruction of unclean things by fire in the valley of Hinnom; or perhaps from the combustion of bodies there, as represented in the last chapter and verse of Isaiah. Under this figure, and others variously related, he describes again and again the outcast state of souls. Sometimes the tokens of pain that are added to waken apprehension, though of course not literal, are such as produce a heavy recoil in our sensibility. All the punishments of the Old Testament, even the curses of Ebal, are as dew in comparison. If he had come into the world to be himself the Nemesis of transgression, he could not have spoken words more appalling. The enforcement power was never before carried so far, and could not, even, in thought, be carried farther. There is no scruple in driving the pressure of interested motive to its last limit. Fear could quiver in the dread of no greater loss. And this, it will be noted, from Jesus, the Saviour of the world! he that is incarnated into the world's curse, and dies in his suffering ministry for it! Observe also—

Has no apparent scruple in the doctrine.

2. That Christ, in these declarations of eternal punishment, never betrays one symptom of doubt, or delicacy, as if there might be some injustice, or over-severity in them, such as needs to be carefully qualified. He plainly enough has no such struggles of mind on the subject, as we have. His most delicate, tenderly sensitive humanity gives no single token of being, either offended, or tried, by the fact of so great severities. It can not be that he is untroubled by questions on this

subject because he is less tender of man's lot, or of God's honor, than we are, or because he is not far enough on in the world's progress, to have had our great theologic problems occur to him. Perhaps we shall not be able to solve this strangely unquestioning manner of his, but I strongly suspect that the secret of it lies in the fact, that he has a way of conceiving the matter and manner of eternal punishment, such as leaves our modern questions out of sight, and does not even allow them to occur. Perhaps he only thinks of the bad man as going on to eternity in his badness, and the laws of retribution, as going along with him, to keep his voluntary bad deeds company, much as they do here; regarding the malefactor as a malefactor still, and suffering, at any given moment, for being just what he is at that moment—that and nothing more. God has, in fact, put nothing of his pain upon him; he only takes it on himself, and there is really no more reason to be troubled about the severity of his lot than there is here in the retributions of this life.

His appalling figures.

He uses, it must be admitted, the most appalling figures—"outer darkness," "great gulf fixed," "thirst," "torment," "wailing," "weeping," "a worm that dieth not," "a fire that is not quenched"—but he has no misgiving; probably because words of any kind are so impotent, in giving the due impression of any state unrealized, and need to be even violently overdrawn to answer their object. However this may be, it is quite evident that the tough questions of our modern philanthropism have either not

arrived, or are quite gone by, and that notwithstanding his wonderfully intense love for mankind, his feeling still goes with the punitive order of God's retributions, adding even heavier emphasis from his own personal indignations. Again

3. It is a remarkable fact that one of the strongest evidences of the strictly superhuman character of Christ is contributed, or experimentally brought out, by the singular command he has over such, even now, as passionately abjure his doctrine. I make no assumption here that goes beyond the fact of their abjuration itself and the manner of it. They will deny that he asserted any such doctrine of punishment. But they will also admit that he testified, again and again, in all most varied and most pungent words of warning, to what sounds very much like it, and which being qualified by no process of interpretation, are the very *ipsissima verba* of the doctrine; that he was the first decisive teacher in this strain; that he insisted much on the point and often recurred to it; and, whatever else may be true, is the practical promulgator and first founder, in that sense, of a something which has gotten footing as the doctrine, or has come to be the doctrine, of eternal punishment. Suppose now that I who write this treatise—a man in my common human figure—had done exactly the same thing, in the same way of precedence, and that, making many speeches on religious subjects, I sprinkle them, all through, as the four gospels are sprinkled, with these fiery denunciations of punish-

Who is he, that he is endured in such teachings?

ment; how many living men of the whole world, if I were to lead off in such a doctrine, would hear me for one moment with patience? They would not stop to find whether, by some elaborate and careful practice on my words, they could sift the offensive doctrine out of them. Such efforts at interpretation would themselves be an offense. Nothing but contempt, downright, instant, unhesitating contempt, is the due, they would say, of such a teacher. He is a man behind the age; a dark-minded fanatic, without feeling, or justice, or reason, representing God by the low severities of his own morbid nature. And yet what reverence is there to Jesus, in the promulgation of such doctrine! They that deny it most confidently will even strain themselves, to find words of honor and eulogy, in which fitly to applaud his virtues and embody their sense of his perfections. Meantime they go into careful examinations of what seem to be his manifold utterances of the doctrine of eternal punishment, and by laboriously ingenious constructions, which he could easily have made unnecessary, but never once remembered to make, they get the bad meaning wholly out of them. Having proved him thus to be, in fact, about the faultiest, loosest teacher, in a matter of mere fact, that ever undertook to lead the world, they acquiesce in him perfectly; their reverence is complete!

They do not perceive, that they have done the difficult thing, and rejected the easy. How much easier, when they were detained by a reverence so profound for the manifestly superhuman character of Christ,

treating him as they could no other being uttering such declarations, to believe that he was good enough and great enough to see the truth of them; too good, too great, as already proved to their feeling, to allow them any hope of improving his doctrine by the screws they put upon his words. The case is one where the text—"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord"—ought to suggest the query whether, possibly, God is not good enough, or good in a sense that is deep enough, to levy these fearful punishments, just because of his goodness; maintaining them as mysteries of beneficent rule whose scope and contents are to us inscrutable. Again—

Admitted still to be great, why not also to be true.

4. A true Christian inquirer, struggling with a burdened feeling, under the huge difficulties of this question, will be very apt to meet with such kind of results, or effects, falling under his notice, in the case of those who deny the fact of eternal punishment, as to start a certain spiritual revulsion in him and persuade him that Christ had some sufficient, profoundly deep and true reason for his doctrine, whether we can find it or not. There is plainly enough no object in preaching this kind of salvation (which is no salvation, because there can be no destruction,) but to find a place of impunity in sin, or at least to loosen the yoke of obligation and make it comfortable. And that, when it is a fact, is about the most contemptible, lowest occupation a mortal can be in. And the fruit will correspond with

Where eternal punishment is denied, shown to be a moral want.

the effort; for the followers of such a leading, it will be observed, range themselves, always and every where, on the side of laxity, or the side opposite to justice and punishment. They will refer all sin to circumstances, and take the blame away. Society is cruel, they will perceive, but wrong, never. But when they come to speak, or be spoken with, in regard to the great spiritual realities of the spiritual life and consciousness, they will scarcely fail to make a demonstration that is simply revolting. To converse successively, with only two or three persons, brought up in this denial of future punishment, and have the conversation turned upon loving God, I have more than once felt would suffice to cure any earnest, living Christian of his misgivings of future punishment, or push him by his most rugged and resolute doubts, whether he can solve them or not. Instead of conceiving of the divine love in that deep, tender way of sacrifice and justifying mercy, that belongs to the cross, they will rattle upon the words in a way so loose and light as to be even shocking. "Do I love God? How could I help loving him? God has never done any thing bad to me, and never wants to do any thing, but to make me happy. Yes, and if there were not so many people praying and supplicating dolefully, as if they were afraid of something, or God a being to be afraid of, I think we should all be happy." Under this gospel of impunity, there grows up a religion which is itself a kind of sauciness to God, as little relieved, as possible, by any subduing property. Beautiful charity! love that bearest

all men's burdens! love that believest, hopest, endurest all things! love that can suffer an enemy! love that in Jesus suffered for a world of enemies! love that is born of God supernaturally in souls under evil! love that is fed and fuelled supernaturally, by Christ and his dear passion, inwardly revealed! what hast thou to do with this unchastened, brassy, dinning confidence, which asserts a religion without fear, lays a claim to happiness apart from all condition of repentance, and magnifies a God who, without maintaining any good of principle, consents to be only the convenience of all!

I draw this picture not for any purpose of odium, but simply because it suggests and so nearly justifies the suspicion, that Christ had a reason for his doctrine of eternal punishment, in the necessary and, to him, perceived wants of character itself. We can see, at a glance, that if there were no such future peril, and God were such a being that no fact of destruction were possible under him, then there could, of course, be no salvation, or Saviour. So far it was a point, intrinsically, of Christianity, to assert the doctrine of future punishment· for upon that basis only it stands, as a real salvation. But there seems to have been a deeper and more subtle reason, both for the fact of such punishment originally instituted, and for the assertion of it by Christ; viz., that, by these tremendous severities alone of God, could men be made to feel the cutting edge of principle enough to have it really get into their love, and make it a principled love. Otherwise it would have no

Punishment an intrinsic element of the gospel.

moral quality at all, but like that we have just described, would be only a brazen forwardness, in approving such a God as meets their liking; a God without terrors, concerned to get them into happiness, either with, or without, principles.

However this may be, it is not difficult to see how far the success and saving power of the gospel of Christ depend on these appeals to fear, and these cogent motivities of interest, by which he so unsparingly presses the world; for by these it is, and only by these, that he takes men at the point where they have any sufficient sensibility. By this appalling law-work he breaks their security, startles their negligence, rouses their guiltiness into a ferment, and calls out the question, what shall we do? Never, it is very true, does any one of these motivities enter into the staple of piety —they are spent when piety begins, or at least passed by accordingly as it advances. And yet these terrible severities—not too terrible, or appalling for the sturdy composure and hardness of sin—are just that fire in the rear, by which, as a more rugged constraint upon nature, the guilty are gathered to the spiritual drawing, or all-constraining loveliness and love, of the cross.

But Christ also adds enforcement, as we have said, to the law—

II. In the fact that he declares himself to be the final judge of the world. Having shown the divine nature travailing in sacrifice and suffering love for the world, and having proclaimed a universal end of God's penal-

alties, to such as are joined to the law-precept, by receiving it in the embrace of his person, he must needs fortify his attitude, by some correspondent assertion of his divine eminence and authority; which he does by openly asserting his personal prerogative, as the final judge of the world. As he is the Saviour of mankind, so he is to be Judge of mankind—and Judge, because he is Saviour. For he distinctly intimates himself that he takes this necessary point of self-assertion, to restrain the presumption otherwise likely to be raised, in the coarse, blind feeling of men, by his great condescensions—"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." Again also, when he says—"And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man." In other words, the very fact that he was become the Son of Man, humbled to the weakness of humanity, was itself a reason why his equilibrium of dignity should be saved, by the counter-weight of this tremendous office—an office all the more fit to such a purpose, that judges, in the civil state, are conceived to have no right of leniency, or mercy, being set for nothing but the exact application of law to the exact merits of causes; which having done, whether in the sentence of life, or of death, their official function ceases. And so Christ, having bowed himself to all humblest conditions of suffering and sorrow, that he might ransom guilty souls from their deserved penalties, ceases fully and finally from a rela-

He will vindicate law by the judgment of the world.

tionship that would make him possibly no better, at last, than a convenience for men's sins, and takes his attitude of judgeship over them; waiving henceforth all the inclinings and soft connivings and tender flexibilities of his mercy, that he may be forever known as the arbiter and king of the worlds.

I do not undertake to settle, in this connection, precisely what is meant by the judgment of the world; whether it is to be literally a trial had in public assembly, or before the grand convocation of the worlds, or whether such representations given are only figures impressively drawn, to give, in the general, or by means of one general scene, what is passing and to pass in the innumerable and particular cases of souls, when they arrive, or come in to receive their personal awards and enter on their everlasting state. This, however, will be obvious that, if there were no work of grace or mercy on foot, no supernatural salvation, there would scarcely need to be any judge of the world. The transgressors would go to their exact lot of punishment just as stones under gravity fall to the ground. The grand penal order of nature would be at once judge and executioner, and they would sink to their true level, by inevitable laws, that find them out as exactly even, as God himself can know them.

The judgment made necessary by the supernatural salvation.

But the judgment of the world under Christianity is made necessary, by the fact that, in a mixed experience under law and grace, where the penal order of nature is restricted, tempered, mitigated, by the supernatural

interactions of grace, no punishment takes place in the exact manner and degree that it would under natural retribution, pure and simple. The laws of natural retribution continue, in one view, as at the first, and their operation continues, and yet their action has been so far modified hitherto by the interactions of a supernatural mercy—engaged all our life long to rescue us from them—also by the fact that a new matter of responsibility has come into their jurisdiction to increase, henceforward, the guilt of sin, and to intensify proportionally its desolating penal effects, that a supernatural judgment-seat is wanted, to settle the account of justice and distribute the allotments of souls. When so many diverse and mixed qualities of character are generated under the contesting powers of penalty and mercy, so many variously appearing, yet really similar, so many similarly appearing, yet really various, kinds of product, some tribunal of judgment appears to be wanted, to make the necessary discrimination of desert and order. It is a matter of no great consequence to know what is the exact grade of any man's demerit—let the laws of retribution settle that—but it is a matter of consequence where some are so bold in their conceit, and some are so dejected in their modesty and conscious lack of goodness, to have the great life-question of order and kind settled, by a solemn act of recognition or rejection.

The Christian gospel requires, in this manner, a judgment-seat, and in this office Christ himself asserts the authority that is given him. The subject is ad-

verted to in a great many of his parables, and expressly set forth in many of his public discourses. In the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew he photographs the transaction in a scene of judgment formally conceived as universal. He comes, the Son of Man, to sit upon the throne of his glory. All nations are gathered before him, not to be graduated, but separated in kind, one from another, as sheep from goats. These he recognizes and calls, these he disowns and repels, all under the simple question, whether they are with him personally in his cause and with him in his sacrifice or not. Some who were too modest and poor in spirit, to have any feeling of confidence, are surprised by his welcome —"ye did it unto me"—asking, "when ministered we to thee?" And others who have always been assuming to maintain his cause, and half expecting him to acknowledge his great obligations to them, are as much surprised by his terrible sentence of rejection, "ye did it not to me." Thus before Christ's bar, as he himself conceives, the tremendous issues of life are to be finally determined—"These shall go away into everlasting punishment, the righteous into life eternal."

The *dies iræ* of Christ and his followers.

Furthermore how entirely compatible his love and suffering patience are, with all severest rigors of justice, will be seen in the impressions of his judgment office and day that are held by his followers. They call it the *dies iræ*, the great day of his wrath, not refusing to magnify the day as a day of great majesty and revelation, even "the revelation of the righteous judgment of

God." They have plainly enough no such thought as that the justice of God, or the divine ὀργη has been satisfied and forever evened in its demands, by the sufferings of Christ. Nor have they taken up, it is equally plain, any such impressions of the merciful Jesus, the dear Christ of God, as makes it incompatible for him to be invested, some time, in these awful rigors of judgment. That righteous ὀργη, that deep instinct of justice, which dwells in every bosom of love, and without which love could never rise into the majesty of holiness, that wrath which had sometimes kindled so terrible a fire of animosity in the loving ministry of their Master, they expect to be revealed in his judgment proceedings, and they even appear to look upon him in it, with a dread the more appalling, that, as being the natural and necessary counterpart in character of so great sensibility and self-sacrifice, it should therefore be in correspondent measures. Hence the sharp and dreadful paradox they bolt upon us—in a form of words having such vindictive energy that there is nothing, as far as I know, in all human language to match it—"the wrath of the Lamb."

It is certainly most remarkable, considering how Christ himself is the first promulgator of eternal punishment, and is to be himself the judge of the world—revealing the terrible wrath-power of his kingdom, in so many ways and terms so appalling—that he should be conceived to have almost overturned God's law by his terms of mercy, and only not to have done it, by consenting to be an offering before the offended wrath of the law! So he compensated the law by the contribu-

tion of his sufferings, and satisfied the dues of justice. Why does it never occur to such as are taken by this kind of theologic contrivance, that after Christ has made due satisfaction to the wrath-principle of God's justice, there is still wanted, above all, some more tremendous sacrifice, to satisfy the wrath of the Lamb? Never before was the vindicatory principle in government so fearfully asserted as by him. When therefore he has made an end of pacification by his cross, what is to be provided that shall pacify him? Shall he satisfy his own wrath? Or is it possible that he should somehow justify without any satisfaction? And if that is possible, is not the whole scheme of satisfaction exploded, and the wrath-principle found to be itself compatible with mercy?

The enforcements then are all kept good without a satisfaction.

I assume it then, with confidence, to be a conclusion firmly established, that Christ, in preparing the free remission of sins, has not taken from God's law, or at all weakened, its necessary enforcements. Author himself and first adequate promulgator of the doctrine of eternal punishment, invested with all the honors and authoritative rights of the Supreme Judge of men; armed, in such capacity, with indignations equal to the lamb-like patience of his sacrifice—it is not by him, that men have the pressure of God's penal enforcements taken off. On the contrary, when before had the law such a pressure of enforcement in the plane of interest, as it has under Christ himself? When before were

such thunderbolts dropped in the path of the fears? When had the misgivings of guilty conviction such earthquakes to feel heaving under ground? When were delay and neglectfulness cut short, by such hidden perils waiting for the spring? Why, it is even a full half the peculiar force of Christianity, that it brings the law of God into a pressure on the soul so nearly irresistible! It had before no motive in comparison. Christ preaches to the fears and the self-interested calculations of deliberative prudence, in a way so positive as to suggest no sense of scruple in him, and permit no evasion of doubt in us. He begins low down, at the underwork, we may almost say, of nature, and expects to regenerate, in the supernatural life of faith, only them whom he has first arrested and concluded in sin. The letter that killeth is his, as truly as the Spirit that giveth life.

No, if there be any thing in the gospel of Christ least of all to be apprehended, it is a discontinuance, or weakening of law. The law-power not only remains uninjured, to do its work of enforcement in souls, but it is brought closer to them and is made weightier and more imminent in its pressure, than ever before. Not only temporal motives, but all the powers, in fact, of the world to come, are now crowded into its sanctions. And so little apprehension is there accordingly, in the New Testament, of any possible damage to God's law, or justice, that the immense theologic concern for it, which puts us to a strain of contrivance so pressing, is even most innocently overlooked. I do not even recall

any single mention, by the New Testament writers, of the fact that Christ, in his death, was laying a necessary "*ground*" of forgiveness, or justification, without which it would not be safe, as a matter of law and sound government, to forgive. He comes to work out forgiveness, or rather to work it in—this is abundantly declared—but there is no syllable of reference to the fact that he is doing so much, or contributing so great suffering, to make forgiveness possible. There appears to be no suspicion as yet that this kind of meaning has only been foisted upon the word, and does not belong to it, but the discovery must ere long arrive. And yet, if the case were different, if there must be a loss to the law from the dispensation of forgiveness, and a compensation must be made to the law, what grander, more indisputable compensation could be offered by Christ, than his new doctrine of eternal punishment, set home by the tremendous emphasis he gives it in the declaration, that he will be the Judge himself!

Retributive causes not abolished by deliverance from them.

But there is a possible objection that requires to be noticed. Thus if natural causes, or causes in the scheme of nature, have been so arranged as to chastise and duly punish all sin, and if then Christ intervenes by a movement supernatural, to work a release from these causes in the redemption of souls, and does actually deliver them, it appears, after all, that the enforcement of law is so far, at least, given up, or put by. To this I answer, first, that the enforcement is no more given up than the law of gravity is given up when I sustain, by

my will, a body that would otherwise fall to the ground; for in such a case, the law of gravity continues as truly as if it were left to its own way. And, secondly, that the force-power of nature was originally set, to work enforcement for the law of duty, just because and by means of a grace-power, supernaturally working with it and complementary to it. There is no greater mistake than to assume, as many do, that the law was put forward first to be maintained by enforcement, and then that the grace-power comes in afterward to displace it. The scheme of moral government was to be a double acting and essentially restorative scheme from the first, and the two great factors were to be coördinate, always going along by a correspondent development, and assisting each the other. And exactly this is what we find even in the facts of the New Testament; the side of retribution appears, according to our human judgment, to be intensified in about the same ratio as the side of grace. Neither is any thing more clear, than that the enforcement side depends on the gracious, quite as much as this on the other. For the retributive causes of nature, once beginning to run, and wholly left to themselves, put the subject down, at once, under a doom of complete disability, and cease to have any value as enforcements at all. No longer motives, they are simply manacles. But the moment a supernatural grace is felt coming in, as it did at the first, to bring hope and liberating help, the retributive causes become enforcements, just as they were meant to be. The doctrine of endless punishment, taken as put into words,

was never any thing but a version of the fact, that retributive causes are naturally endless in their propagations; but the understanding was, and always has been, that a supernatural grace, going side by side, should even keep them in power, as they give power to it, and that so the grand joint product of justice and grace should be always preparing. The very last thing to be apprehended is that the forgiving side is going to prostrate the law side. The law could do nothing but create disability, in that it was weak, without the other. If there had been a law given which could have given righteousness, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But now the law is a schoolmaster for grace, and righteousness a free gift for the law. So between both there is salvation.

Besides the personal moral power of Christ, that which he obtains by his suffering ministry of love and sacrifice, gets a tonic efficacy how majestic, by the tremendous moral emphasis of his denouncements, and the energy he shows in being able to use force enough for his purposes; even as every great general gets the moral power to carry his will by a word, in the fact that he has been able to carry it by his previous championship of force, in fields more impressive than words.

In advancing this doctrine of punishment, I am well aware that some will call it the doctrine of Radamanthus, and that perhaps without concern to settle the question, whether Christ had any better title to respect than he. They have had a thought of God's beneficence, they

This rugged, unphilanthropizing gospel will stand.

will say, and they dare to believe in it. They believe that his Creatorship and counsel will be vindicated, as they only can, by results of universal order and happiness, such as he has put it in our hearts to desire. Perhaps I am as much exercised by the desire as they, but I can not take that desire as a proof. Our existence has been mixed with discord from the first, and, for aught we any of us know, this rough element belongs inherently to the highest attainable state of good. That their gospel of speculative philanthropism is carrying just now the vote of the world, more and more largely, is quite probable. But I have thought much, in comparison, of the older, more rugged, rougher gospel, and I feel obliged to say, that it looks most real, and capable, and great. There is nerve in this, and there is none in the other. Christ here takes hold of human nature as if he knew it, and had something great to do for it. He bears a look of mystery, greatness in counsel, and efficient rule, such as the God of the world visibly bears himself—He that has thunders, and tempests, and earthquakes, and wild waters, and death-dealing causes, hovering in silence, or ravening in terror, through all his works. The Christ, so carefully separated from his own reiterated fact of future punishment, has no grand governmental strategy, and bears no hand of mighty working any where. No man need ever be warned lest he "be offended in him;" for we find him offering only sweets for motivities, and bathing in soft odors and oily promises the obstinacy of sin. No! the Christ of the old gospel, he of eternal

punishment, he of the judgment-day—the more I think of him, and of man, and the kind of Saviour man requires to get hold of him, and rouse him out of his death-torpor in sin, the more clear it is that he, the terrible Christ, is the Christ we want. The other, I strongly suspect is a conceit of human opinion, representing only a phase or fashion of the time, that will be very soon gone by; while the real Immanuel, coming in much mystery, and raising many hard questions, and fitly called Wonderful, will be proving, in all time, his great power and beneficence, only the more sublimely; having quantities in him that are not from men, or in men's measures; breaking out visibly in great victories all down the ages, and reigning, as will finally be acknowledged, in a kingdom that shall have no end.

So far we accept the unquestionable future of revelation. As regards that ideal kosmos, in which our philanthropic friends propose to confer so much greater honor upon God, I will simply suggest, that they might less dishonor him, if they could allow that our present state is, in some true sense, a kosmos. God never made any state that was not. Inasmuch, therefore, as his future kosmos must, like the present, make room for the fact of liberty, who can be sure that there will not be in it jars and thunders of dissent, impossible to be excluded—shocks that will stir the tragic movement in feeling, and keep off the tameness of any such total elysium, or general Peace-Society state, as our speculative seers are wont to promise—even as the kosmos of matter rests in the perilous equilibrium and lively play of antagonistic forces?

CHAPTER VI.

GOD'S RECTORAL HONOR EFFECTIVELY MAINTAINED.

To maintain the precept and enforce the sanctions of law, are not the only matters of concern to be provided for, in the promulgation of forgiveness; a third matter, much insisted on, is that the magistrate himself keep good his Rectoral Honor and the Legal Justice of his magistracy. Regarded as the administrator of instituted government, he is practically the government himself, and is looked upon as being the government. Hence if it should happen that, in the introduction of a free justification, God's magisterial character—his Rectoral Honor and Justice—is let down, or loses the necessary impressiveness, the damage incurred will be fatal. And this, it will be remembered, was one of the alleged forms of detriment, or damage, to be apprehended, unless some kind of satisfaction is made to God's justice. All the compensation theories have a principal respect to this supposed necessity. For how shall God be just, and have respect in the character of justice, unless he executes justice? or unless he somehow has his justice satisfied, by volunteer pains contributed for that purpose?

Hence the many, variously turned contrivances of

substitution, by which this point is supposed to be carried, and a ground of justification prepared that saves the justice and public honor of God, in a release of his penalties. These various schemes or theories are made up in the terms, official substitution, penal suffering, expiation, judicial satisfaction, ransom, purchase, bearing the curse, payment of the debt, and the like; used sometimes interchangeably as being, to some extent, equivalents, or more commonly set up, each by itself, as the idol figure of some peculiar doctrine dominated by it.

The New England scheme of substitution.

Our New England teachers, for nearly a century past, have commonly taken a form of representation that has not as yet obtained general currency any where else. Pressed by the difficulty of any scheme that supposes a literal satisfaction of God's justice, or the release of the guilty obtained by the penal suffering of the innocent —because it so profoundly shocks the most immovable, and most nearly innate convictions of our moral nature—also by the new-sprung inference of universal salvation that inevitably follows; viz., that, if Christ has borne the punishment of the world, no principle of justice in God will allow him to inflict that punishment again upon the transgressors themselves—pressed by these difficulties they began to conceive that Christ, in his cross, maintained the righteousness of God without punishment, by what was expressed, to the same effect as in punishment, of God's abhorrence to sin. Christ, they conceived, has simply shown, by

his death, the same abhorrence to sin that would have been shown by the punishment of the guilty. The righteousness of God therefore stands erect and fair, even though punishment is released.

Of this latter and later mode of doctrine I will speak first and briefly, recurring afterwards to the older, which turns on the penal suffering of Christ, and the maintenance and satisfaction thereby of God's justice.

No fault that it turns on what is expressed.

There is no room for scruple in affirming, that every thing done by Christ gets its value, under laws of expression, or, as in modern phrase, under terms of esthetic representation; christianity as a power on the world, *is* expression. Nay, the incarnation itself is what is expressed, and not what is contained, or suffered quantitatively as a compensation to justice, in the incarnate person. Punishment itself, apart from the matter of penal enforcement, considered in the last previous chapter, has besides a most sacred and noble efficacy in what it expresses of God—the determination of his will, his righteousness, in a word his rectoral fidelity to the law. This expression, too, is wanted as being the equivalent of a like impression; for nothing is expressed to us, save as it is impressed in us, in the same degree. And in just this way the gospel itself is resolvable into expression, because it is wanted in a way of impression; which is the real effect and mode of its value.

Thus far we have no difficulty; but the question still

remains whether a fit compensation is really made for the release of punishment, by what is expressed of abhorrence to sin, in the sufferings of Christ? That no compensation is wanted—justice and forgiveness being co-factors, working together in the instituted government of God, and the justice-factor being even confirmed in its vigor, by the revelation of future punishment and the inauguration of Christ as the judge of the world—was abundantly shown in the last chapter. But consenting, for the present, to waive this advantage, we accept the question, whether any expression made of abhorrence to sin is a proper and sufficient substitute for punishment?

Abhorrence to sin no fit equivalent of justice.

And here it occurs to us, at the outset, as a very obvious fact, that abhorrence to sin expresses almost nothing that would be expressed by punishment. Abhorrence is a word of recoil simply and not a word of majesty. There is no enforcement, no judicial vigor in it. I may abhor what I am only too weak, or too much in the way of false pity, to handle with the due severity. It does not even require a perfect being to abhor sin, especially in the wicked forms of it—that is to draw back from it, as being disgusted and shocked by it. But there is no such drawing back in justice. Justice moves on in the positive vigor of the wrath-principle, girded with inflexible majesty, for the doing upon wrong of what wrong deserves. To put forward an expression therefore of God's abhorrence to sin, as a substitute for justice, is to give it the weakest possible

substitute. If the abhorrence could be shown keeping company with justice, and justice with it, there would be no deficiency, but to make a governmental sanction out of abhorrence by itself, and publish a free forgiveness to sin, on the ground of it, is to make forgiveness safe by a much less positive and weaker way of handling than forgiveness itself. All doubt on this point ought to be forever ended, by simply asking what kind of figure, as regards efficiency, any government of the world would make, dropping off its punishments and substituting abhorrences?

No abhorrence expressed in Christ's death.

But this abhorrence theory encounters another objection equally fatal, in the fact that really no abhorrence at all to sin is expressed in the suffering death of Christ. All manifestations of goodness and purity are implicit evidences of such abhorrence, but beyond that we discover no evidence more direct. To what in the transaction of the cross can God's abhorrence, by any possibility, fasten itself? Does God abhor the person of Jesus? No. His character? No. His redeeming office? No. The sins of the world that are upon him? They are not upon him, save in a figure, as the burden that his love so divinely assumes. His standing in the place of transgressors? He stands not in that place at all, as having their moral desert upon him—only in their place as a good man stands in the place of his enemy, to bear his wrongs and make his own violated feeling the argument of pity and patience with him. Where then does the abhorrence of God take

hold of Christ or of his death at all? What does it find in him, or about him, or on him, or under him, that can be any wise abhorrent? If it should be said that God really abhors nothing in him, but only lays severity upon him, to be taken by us as the sign of his abhorrence, then how does it appear that the severity laid upon him has any moral significance at all, if it is not penal suffering? If he is put in our place to suffer the penalty of our sins, then we can easily see abhorrence to our sins expressed in his suffering. But mere severities and pains laid upon him, even though God violated his own deep sympathies and loving approbations to do it, can only show the fact of something very abhorrent somewhere, and is much more likely to raise abhorrence in us, than to signify God's abhorrence to us.

It will be found accordingly, if the language of those who take up this abhorrence theory is carefully watched, that they have a latent reference back always to Christ, as being in some penal condition, without which our sin is no way concerned with his suffering, or his suffering with it. The object was to get away from the very repulsive idea of a penal character in Christ's suffering, and so from the appalling objections that seemed to be incurred by it; but when the point of difficulty is once turned by the softer word "abhorrence," we look back and find the penal suffering held mentally in reserve, in order to get the Divine Sufferer into an attitude, where God's abhorrences can be imagined to adhere to him, or find expression through him. Thus it will be said

Latent resumption still of the penal suffering.

continually, that "God's abhorrence to sin was laid upon his Son"—which means, if it means any thing, that God's judicial indignations were laid upon him; that God withdraws from the Son in the agony and upon the cross, to signify his displeasure, that is, his judicial displeasure; nay, the doctrine will sometimes be even doubled round again so as to say that God's "justice is satisfied" in his death; only to be doubled back, of course, when the objections incurred by the scheme of penalty are to be met; for then it will be answered that Christ does not suffer penally, but only in a way to let God's abhorrence to sin be expressed through his suffering.

I conclude, on the whole, that this New England expedient of conceiving the substitution of Christ, as being only God's way of showing his repugnances to sin by the suffering of Christ, instead of doing it by the punishment of the guilty, has in fact, no base of reality, even to those who resort to it, save as it reverts to the older scheme of penal suffering and resumes all the methods of that scheme. Indeed it will even be found, that Dr. Edwards, having taken the ground * that "the death of Christ manifests God's hatred of sin, in the same sense as the damnation of the wicked," still carries out his reasonings, under the very scheme of penal suffering that has been renounced, to a point of excess in that scheme that is abundantly shocking; viz., to the conclusion that "the sufferings of Christ were agreeable to God." "If, by mere pain," he says,† "be

* Discourses on Atonement, Park's edition, p. 31. † Page 35.

meant pain abstracted from the obedience of Christ, I can not see why it may not be agreeable to God. It certainly is in the damned; and, for the same reason might have been, and doubtless was in the case of our Lord."

To pursue this particular scheme or doctrine farther appears to be unnecessary, after we have found it lapsing always in the older doctrine it undertook to qualify, or displace. To this older doctrine we accordingly return.

Here it is conceived that God, as a ruler, must execute justice because he is just—if not upon the guilty, then upon Christ their substitute. Justice he must have, the inexorable, everlasting wrath [ὀργη] of his judicial nature must be satisfied; and as it was to be satisfied by the penal suffering of transgressors, so it can only be satisfied, in case of their release, by a full compensation of penal suffering offered by their deliverer. Now if it were simply conceived that God, by a necessary, everlasting charge upon his moral nature, is fated to be the absolute Nemesis of wrong,—unable therefore to avert himself, or be averted, till every iota and least speck of it has gotten its full desert—there would, at least, be a certain sublimity in the conception. But there is no such thought as that; the inexorable justice [wrath] wants only suffering it is conceived for its satisfaction, and the suffering of innocence will be just as good as the suffering of guilt, if only there is enough of it;

Immutable Justice only not sufficiently just.

which is about the same thing as to say that God's justice is so immovably set on having its due of pains and penalties, that it will be just as well satisfied in having them, apart from all relations of justice. There was never a doctrine that more obviously broke itself down by its own simple statement. Nor is it any wise relieved, when it is added that the pains and penalties which justice obtains for satisfaction are not exacted, but yielded by consent; for then we have a kind of justice under all most sounding epithets of majesty, immutable, necessary, sovereign, which is yet willing to get its pains and penalties by contract!

Softened or varied forms of the doctrine.

I ought perhaps to say that, under the general phraseology of this doctrine, there appears to be some variety of impression indicated by a softening, or modified definition of terms. Many do not understand by God's justice any vindictive attribute or instinct that must have satisfaction, but only a character of public justice, or general justice, that is necessary to be maintained, by a firm and exact distribution of penalty, in order to keep the instituted government in respect and authority. These only want the character of public justice made good, by some other expression—commonly by that of abhorrence—when that which is made by punishment is taken away. Some can not satisfy themselves in what manner the needed compensative expression is made, and not finding how to explain the difficulties met, take refuge at last in mystery—not observing that where confessedly nothing is known, there can be noth-

ing expressed. These lower, softer kinds of commutation however do not satisfy, at all, the more logical, firmly dogmatic natures, and the tendency has been, more and more distinctly of late, to settle into what are called the deeper grounds of the subject, and plant the doctrine in the soil of first principle; viz., in what is conceived to be the eternal, necessary attribute of divine justice itself.

I could hardly trust myself to state the argument, or vindication, by which this more adequate and deeper doctrine is supposed to be maintained; and therefore I am constrained to cite the language of two late writers of distinction, that they may accurately represent themselves and their view of the subject. I do it for no purpose of controversy, but only to obtain, for the great matter in question, the easiest and surest mode of settlement.

Thus it is formally argued by a teacher in great authority,* that—"A being determined by considerations outside of Himself [considerations of public effect for example] can not be God. It is essential to the very nature of God that he be independent and omniscient; but with these attributes a determination *ab extra* [as where God is conceived, in the death of his son, to be actuated by considerations of public law and authority, and results of salvation gained, or to be gained, by his sacrifice] is utterly and forever irreconcilable. * * * Were theologians to receive this first truth and couple

Absolute Justice how to be conceived.

* Biblical Repertory, A. D. 1859, pp. 474–5.

it with that noble utterance with which the Shorter Catechism opens—'Man's chief end, etc.,' they would never be found framing theories, which would strip God of his justice and set the universe [i. e., the benefit of it] above the throne of their Creator. * * * God is himself the highest end for which he could act."

Now it is very true that, in one view, there is and can be nothing out of God, and that, in the same, he can act for nothing out of himself. It is also true that his acts and purposes are not for things, or creatures taken up as ends, after their creation; but these things and creatures, present eternally to God's thought as possibilities, in himself, were as truly his ends, before they began to exist externally, as they could be afterward. They were, in fact, as truly other and not himself, as they came to be afterward. For them and their benefit accordingly he has eternally acted. To say otherwise, denying that he can have ends out of himself, under the supposed Calvinistic pretext of doing honor to his sovereignty, is to make him Allah and not God. He is even radically unchristianized in his perfections. For it is the glory of God, the summit even of his glory, that, being sovereign, he knows, not justice only, but self-sacrifice, and is so sublimely given to ends out of himself, that he can even be a suffering God in his feeling, for the recovery and salvation of his enemies. Doubtless he does all things, in a sense, for his own glory; which is only saying, if we speak with intelligence, that he does all things to make the luster of his greatness and moral

God is not Allah nevertheless.

perfections visible; in other words to radiate abroad his love and goodness, in a way of imparting himself; which is to all created minds their only hope of perfection and complete beatitude. We are brought round thus, in fact, upon the noble conclusion that he does every thing for ends *ab extra*, not for himself. The argument, therefore, that God must have the everlasting anger of his justice satisfied, because he is acting wholly for himself, appears to be about as repulsive, in every way, as any thing well can be. It even makes the grim ὀργη, or vindictive attribute, to be itself the summit of God's perfections. Insisting that he must do every thing for himself, nothing for any public ends of benefit and blessing to creatures, it seems even to say, what certainly can not be meant, that his very perfection is, to stand, first of all, for the satisfaction of his wrath, and kindle his glory at the point of his resentments!

Another conception of Absolute Justice.

Another attempt has also been made, in quite another quarter, to maintain what is virtually the same ground, only it is done by a more ingenious and plausible way of argument. Consenting virtually to the principle, as every intelligent thinker must, that we can properly conceive God only by drawing on material included in our own human consciousness, the writer finds, in all "ethical natures," whether it be the nature of God, or of man, a certain prime element that he calls "Justice," and which is instinctively arrayed, roused to vindictive energy, against all wrong, or transgression. This

judicial nature, called "justice," he also conceives to be the point absolute in moral character. This must stand, and nothing else which will not stand with it. Thus he says—*

"A fundamental attribute of Deity is justice. This comes first into view and continues in sight to the very last, in all inquiries into the Divine Nature. No attribute can be conceived that is more ultimate and central than this one. This is proved by the fact that the operation of all the other divine attributes, love not excepted, is *conditioned* and *limited* by justice. For whatever else God may be, or may not be, he must be just. It is not optional with him to exercise this attribute, or not to exercise it, as it is in the exercise of that class of attributes which are antithetic to it. We can say—'God may be merciful, or not, as he pleases,' but we can not say, 'God may be just or not as he pleases.' It can not be asserted that God is inexorably obligated to show pity; but it can be categorically affirmed that God is inexorably obligated to do justly."

His all-conditioning, first attribute of justice therefore must have "*plenary satisfaction*" he maintains, else there can be no deliverance. The conditionated grace of love must wait on the unconditionated, absolute impulse of justice, and drink the cup of its indignations dry. Thus it is conceived that, "In the incarnate Son, God voluntarily endures the weight of his own judicial displeasure, in order that the real criminal may be

* Bibliotheca Sacra, Oct., 1859. Art. II—*The Atonement a Satisfaction for the Ethical Nature of both God and Man.*

spared. The Divine compassion itself bears the infliction of the Divine indignation, in the place of the transgressor. The propitiation is no oblation *ab extra*, it is wholly *ab intra*, a self-oblation upon the part of Deity itself, by which to satisfy those immanent and eternal imperatives of the Divine Nature, which, without it, must find their satisfaction in the punishment of the transgressor." "Side by side in the Godhead, there dwell the impulse to punish and the desire to pardon; but the desire to pardon is realized, in act, by *carrying out* the impulse to punish; not indeed upon the person of the criminal, but upon that of his substitute. And the substitute is the Punisher Himself."

I have stated thus at large and carefully this newly elaborated scheme of satisfaction, partly because it has a certain point of merit, and partly because it is a failure where a sufficiently strong failure was wanted. The point of merit is that it has the ingenuousness to put entirely by the doubling, battledooring art commonly practiced in discussions of this subject; it does not make Christ other than God, that he may offer something to God's justice; and then a divine person [God] that he may be able to offer what is sufficient; and then again human that the divine may not suffer; but it takes the ground and faithfully adheres to it, that the satisfaction made is wholly *ab intra*, or within the divine nature itself. The point of failure is equally important, because it brings the doctrine of penal suffering and judicial satisfaction, to just that issue, where its failure is likely to be final and conclusive.

First of all, the ingenuous admission, here made, that the justice of God is satisfied from within himself, or by punishment dispensed upon himself, is even admirably fatal. What kind of power any Ruler must hold, in the impressions of his subjects who, to make sure of justice, takes all his punishments out of himself, it is not difficult to see. There plainly could not be a weaker figure in the name of government.

A very weak justice that God exacts of himself.

Besides the justice gotten, in this manner, must be as insipid to him, as it is useless for the purposes of government. Justice wants what is just if it wants any thing, and here it is found feeding itself out of that which is exactly not just—what vestige of justice can there be in any punishment which a righteous God gets out of himself? Is it so then, after all, that this inexorable, undivertible Nemesis of God's ethical nature, this judicial sentiment which must be satisfied first and before every thing else, will be just as well satisfied with a punishment not just, as with one that is?

And the justice is not just beside.

There also appears to be a remarkable oversight here, in the scheme of satisfaction proposed, as regards the penal suffering itself. "The Divine compassion itself bears the infliction of the Divine indignation in the place of the transgressor." Why the divine compassion, more than the divine justice? Does the justice punish the compassion? For aught that appears there is no suffering in the compassion more than in the justice. By sup-

God suffers—not his compassions.

position, the truth is, merely, that there is a conflict between the two contrary impulses, justice and compassion, and the divine nature—not specially the compassion, not specially the justice—suffers. These words *justice* and *compassion* do not as having each distinct sensibilities make up the deity; they inhere in a Being, and that being, as being, suffers, by their conflict. Does it then satisfy justice, that the being in whom it inheres, suffers partly on account of it?

Besides, if it were conceivable that the being took so much suffering wholly on his love, or on account of his love, did it never occur to the writer that if he had refused, for love's sake, to encounter so much suffering he would certainly have suffered infinitely more? Nay, that such a refusal would even have turned the Divine bosom itself into a hell of suffering forever? Given the fact of God's Infinite Love, he suffers demonstrably, not more, but less, in consenting to be the deliverer of men—by suffering however great.

Withheld from suffering would have suffered more.

But the scheme breaks down most fatally of all in the confusion of meaning, or the covering up of a double meaning, in the word *justice*. A sufficient discrimination here would have shown that the absolute justice pertaining to ethical natures is a fiction, without any shadow of reality. It is almost incredible, that a really intelligent writer should throw himself upon the axiom, "God must be just," "God is inexorably obligated to do justly," without perceiving that we assent to it for

The Justice conceived is ambiguous.

no other reason than that the words "just" and "justly" mean "righteous" and "righteously." God can not of course do any thing unrighteous, or, in that sense, unjust; that is God must keep his integrity. Is that the same thing as to say that God has no option left, but to stand by retributive justice and do by all men exactly as they do to others? Calling "the impulse to punish" justice, has he no liberty left, but to follow that impulse, just as far as it must go to be exhausted? If that should possibly be true, it will require something more to establish it than simply to propound it as an axiom. Interpose, at this point, two very simple distinctions and the supposed infallible argument vanishes.

Righteousness and Justice, Wrath and Justice.

First, the distinction between righteousness and justice; righteousness, being a character grounded in the absolute, unconditioned law of right existing before government; and justice, being a rectoral, politico-judicial character, maintained by the firm vindication of government; conditioned of course by the wants of government. Second, the distinction between the wrath-principle and justice; the wrath-principle being only that moral sensibility, or passion, that impels a moral nature to the infliction of evil in redress of wrong, and steels it against the restraints of false pity; and justice being, in the administration, a due infliction of such evil, according to the ill desert of the wrong. By the first distinction, righteousness is seen to be absolute, and justice to be a matter only of means to ends, and

so of deliberative counsel. By the second, the wrath-principle is seen to be no law at all, but only an impulse to be regulated by counsel; which, when it is, makes justice; when it falls short, laxity; when it runs to excess, revenge and cruelty. I have the same kind of ethical nature as God, and it is even a praise in me, nay, an obligation upon me, to do by my enemy better than he deserves—to forget my injuries and even to suffer for his good. Is it then a fault in God that he does the same? It is very true that I administer no government over my enemy, and so far there is a difference. But this difference leaves it optional with God to do by his enemy still better than he deserves, whenever he can do it, without injury to the public interest of government. And if that is agreed, where is the absolute, all-conditioning, unconditioned justice-element of his nature—the wrath that is to bridle and bestride everlastingly his will and counsel? Ceasing in this manner to call righteousness justice, and justice wrath, the claim that wrath is God's first attribute, and must be satisfied, is seen to be quite groundless. And the supposed Rhadamanthine cup, that requires to be kept exactly full of blood, to let forgiveness into the world, is happily found to be only an ambiguous term in speech and nothing more!

It will occur to almost any one, that this very huge mistake respecting the absolute nature of justice, originates in a confounding of righteousness and justice. That is absolute, unconditioned, unconditional, a law to all moral natures and even to God; a law, as we have

seen,* before God undertakes to so much as organize a government for it. For this law absolute, the government of God including his justice only maintains guard, just as guillotines do for statutes; but guillotines are not statutes themselves, neither is justice the same as the everlasting law of right whose wrongs it avenges. It was not the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the smoke, and the sound of a trumpet that were engraved in stones, but it was the law. Law is the principal and absolute matter, the variable and conditional is what counsel arranges and does to vindicate law.†

Righteousness absolute, not justice.

This vindication is justice; a matter of proceeding,

* For the distinction between righteousness and justice, See Chap. I., Part III.

† The Hebrew scriptures have a way of putting these two ideas righteousness and justice together that is instructive. They make use of two distinct sets of words, one that is morally significant, the other forensically; and it is remarkable how firmly these two sets of words, occurring almost constantly in a kind of twin relationship, keep themselves to their places; scarcely ever, or quite never crossing over to uses that confuse their meaning. Thus we have—"righteousness and judgment"—"righteous judgment"—"justice [i. e., righteousness] and judgment"—"just [i. e., righteous] judgment"—"judgment and justice" [i. e., righteousness]—with a great variety of similar combinations; where it will be observed, in the last three cases, that our English translation, putting *justice* and *just* in the place of *righteousness* and *righteous*, makes a considerable look of confusion; owing to the fact that the words *just* and *justice* are so often used, in English, in the judicial and vindicatory sense. It would have been very much better if the translation had excluded this ambiguity, by steadily representing the steadiness of the original, in a use only of the words *righteous* and *righteousness*, and reserving the terms *just*, *justice*, *judgment* and the like, for the other class of uses, the

or executive counsel, as truly as the fire that fell on Sodom, or the destruction of the golden calf. Or if we use the epithet as a word of character, the character is not original and absolute in God, but is obtained by doing justice. Which again requires to be done, only because, and just so far as, it is means to ends in a way of maintaining government; not because God's nature contains a wrath-principle absolute, that must be exactly satisfied. And still it is, with many, a question how far, or whether in fact ever, it can be relaxed? also whether, if relaxed by forgiveness, it must not be somehow compensated? And they even go so far as to be sensitively concerned for God's law, if he is conceived to let go any sin, without some exact equivalent obtained. To proclaim a free remission, without some such equivalent, they do not hesitate to say would quite break down his government; he might be a good adviser still, they will say, but nothing more—no real governor at all.

And yet we can easily see that any such kind of concern is theologic with us, and not practical. We do not practically feel, after all, that in the universal free remission published by Christ, God's rectoral authority is at all weakened, or requires any new buttress of support to be added. And the probable reason is that the im-

After all, have no such concern for God's justice.

vindicatory, in the manner observed by the scripture. Nobody in that case would ever have begun to imagine that retributive justice was an original, everlasting, unconditioned, first principle in the moral nature of God. That is true of righteousness only, never of justice.

mense reinforcement of eternal obligation by Christ's doctrine of future punishment, and of the future judgment by himself, puts all thought of concern for God's authority so far away, that it can not even occur to us. We find ourselves quivering for dread, under even mercy itself. The necessity of some compensation made to God's justice occurs to no man, save in a way of theory.

Passing now into another field, let us consider, in a way more positive, what Christ has really done that affects, or may be seen to affect, the interests of justice. The remainder of the chapter will be occupied with matter that I could well enough put forward as a way of compensation; suffering no doubt whatever that it would be more satisfactory, closer to the problem of compensation itself, and more genuine than the others of which I have been speaking. But I shall offer it, instead, simply as proof, how closely God adheres to law and justice still in the very matter of vicarious sacrifice. And I let go, in this way, what might be a considerable relief, or commendation to many, just because I have too little respect for the compensations, to be accessory, in any way, to this kind of wrong against the simplicity of the gospel. These compensations have a too contrived look, and suggest too easily the ingenious littleness and tumid poverty of man's invention. I would rather have the gospel in God's way of dignity without them, than to have it in a guise so artificial and meager without the dignity.

It lies in the very conception of vicarious suffering I am giving in this treatise, that Christ is entered practically into the condition of evil and made subject to it. This condition, too, of evil, we shall find is, in some very important sense, a penal condition. It is what is called, in one of the epistles, "the curse;" an epithet which has reference, I suppose, indirectly, if not formally, to the expulsion from paradise set forth in the third chapter of Genesis. Not that the sentence there passed on the guilty pair, and on the world for their sake, was any positive infliction. The scriptures very commonly represent what occurs retributively under fixed laws of nature in that way; because the true moral idea of God's dealings with evil is best conceived in that way, by minds in the earlier stages of development. But to us the effects of sin are its curse, and the laws of retribution, set in deep and firm in the economy of nature itself, are God's appointed ministers of justice. In this manner we conceive that every thing up to the stars—the whole realm of causes—is arranged to be, in some sense, the executive organ of God's moral retributions.

Christ is incarnated into the curse.

Accordingly, the moment any sin breaks out, all the causes set against it fall to being curses upon it. As the sin itself must be against the will of God, and every thing created centers in that will, a shock of discord runs through the general frame-work of life and experience. Order itself utters a groan of disorder. The crystalline whole of things is shattered, as it were by some hard blow, and the fragments begin to grind

heavily upon each other. The soul itself, lacerated by its own wrong, winces for pain, like an eye that has extinguished sight by gazing at the sun. The passions, appetites, fears, aspirations, are pitched into a general quarrel with each other, and especially with the reason and the conscience; and the will, trying to usurp control of all, when it can not sufficiently master any thing, falls off its throne, as a tyrant plucked down by revolt. The body suffers a like shock of disorder, and true health vanishes before the secret crowd of infections, twinges, and immedicable combustions, that steal into the flesh, and traverse the bones, and go burning along the nerves. Evil becomes a kind of organic power in society, in the same way; a kingdom of darkness, a conspiracy of bad opinions and powers usurped for oppression, under which truth and goodness and right and religion itself are, either badly perverted, or cruelly persecuted. The very world, made subject to vanity, groans and travails every where, waiting for some redemption that can redeem it from itself.

Suffers the corporate evil with us.

Now this state of corporate evil is what the scriptures call the curse; and it is directly into this that Christ is entered by his incarnation. In this taking of the flesh, he becomes a true member of the race, subject to all the corporate liabilities of his bad relationship. The world is now to him just what it is to us; save that the retributive causations reach him only in a public way, and never as a sufferer on his own account. He is even depravated or damaged in his human con-

stitution just so far as that constitution is humanly derivative. For he was the Son, not of an immaculate, but of a maculate motherhood; otherwise the humanity assumed were only a dainty, and merely ideal embodiment, such as rather mocks our sympathy than draws it. Besides, he would be tempted in all points like as we are, and give us to see how he bears himself in our lot. Therefore we believe him to have entered himself into our humanity, just as it is—into the curse itself, under which it lies. Joining himself to us, in a participation so real and deep, his birth, we half imagine, coming with a shock, and hear a strange wail break out in the child's first cry. Or if this be fancy only and not fact, we can, at least, see for ourselves that, when he comes to go into his great ministry, in the bonds of the curse, and be joined to all the corporate woes and judicial disorders of the curse, he recoils with a shudder, falls off into a sharp long contest of fasting and temptation, finally to emerge as from a fight with demons.* In this struggle and victory his ministry begins, only the victory does not annihilate, or more than simply master his dreadful repugnances. We can see, at points all the way on, where the pressure of his labor does not occupy and respite his feeling, that his soul wrestles heavily through storms of revulsion, or incipient agony. To calm such storms he continues all night in prayer. He is "grieved," he "groans in spirit," he "has a baptism to be baptized with" and he is "straitened" by the dreadful pressure of

* Christ and his Salvation, pp. 94–111.

it, till it be accomplished. He is "troubled in spirit," he cries "now is my soul troubled," and finally, when all his work is ended, and there is no longer any active ministry to divert or occupy his attention, he sinks, at once, into a dreadful superhuman agony and horror of darkness, moaning heavily—"My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death!" Now in all these incipient agonies, and finally in the last great agony of all, his trouble is mainly mental, as we can see for ourselves.*

It is even so upon the cross, where he dies, physically speaking, before his time, because of the more dreadful moral suffering or revulsion that was on him, in his felt contact with the curse and the judicial horrors of evil.† Partly, it is the concern he feels for his enemies, invoking the curse of his blood upon themselves and their children; and partly it is the baleful shadow that

* This fact has been observed by others, who yet have not regarded his mental suffering as proceeding simply from his love vicariously burdened for the world's evils, and have not taken his redemption as accomplished by his moral power on the world. Thus Dr. John Pye Smith has the insight to perceive, that—"The fact of natural death, the mere ceasing to live, was the smallest part of those sufferings; it was their termination and relief. The sorrow which he endured ineffably transcended all corporal agony. It was death in the soul. Our moral feelings sin has made slow and torpid; so that we can form none but very faint conceptions of the load of distress and horror which passed on that soul, whose unsullied innocence and perfection of sensibility were without an equal in all human nature. He suffered all that a perfectly holy man could suffer, but the highest intensity of his anguish lay in that which was mental." (Testimony to the Messiah, Vol. II, p. 343.)

† Christ and his Salvation, pp. 225–270.

is upon every thing—the hour of darkness and judicial madness that is on his crucifiers, the black flag hung over the sun, and the geologic under-world shuddering horribly for their crime.

Thus it was that he came into the curse and bore it for us. Not that he endures so much of suffering as having it penally upon him—he has no such thought—and yet he is in it, as being under all the corporate liabilities of the race. He had never undertaken to bear God's punishments for us, but had come down simply as in love, to the great river of retributive causes where we were drowning, to pluck us out; and instead of asking the river to stop for him, he bids it still flow on, descending directly into the elemental rage and tumult, to bring us away.

Let us not fail now to observe the deliberate respect he pays to God's instituted government and law in this matter. First, that having all miraculous power, and using that power continually for the removing of diseases, and sometimes even for the quickening of the dead, he steadily refuses to use it for the rescue of his person when arrested; or the confounding of his adversaries, when arraigned; or even to so much as hurl aside the cross and his crucifiers. "No, let sin be just as evil and wild as it will; society just as cruel to all that are in it, me included; just as visibly accursed, as the retributive order of God's causes requires it to be." And again, secondly, observe that, when he has all power to stop the retributive causes, and strip away the whole insti

Observe what honor he pays to justice.

tuted order of justice, he will not do it—will not annihilate, or suspend, or in the least infringe, any single attribute of causation, arranged for the moral discipline of transgression. As he will not discontinue any law of nature by his miracles, he will not do it for the deliverance of a soul, which in fact is much less than a miracle. He is a being strictly supernatural, and his work in the deliverance of transgressors is also supernatural; but in coming to them, in their thraldom, to lift them out by his divine love and sympathy, he only masters the bad causes, but does not stop them. It could as well be imagined that a strong magnet, lifting its iron weight into the air, discontinues, or annihilates the law of gravity. Nothing in short is so conspicuous, in the vicarious suffering and death of Christ, as the solemn deference he pays to God's instituted justice in the world, and even to the causes from which he comes to redeem.

Compensations enough, were compensations wanted.

Whoever then is pressed with the necessity, that some ground of forgiveness should be prepared by Christ, in order to make forgiveness safe—some compensation made to law and justice for the loss they must suffer, in the release of their penalties—has not far to go to find the matter of a compensation that is more than sufficient. Let him remember, first, the tremendous artillery sanctions added by Christ, in his two really new doctrines, that of eternal punishment and that of his coming in glory to judge the world; and then again let him consider Christ in his whole lifetime,

wrestling with God's retributions upon the world, himself included under them, and finally drinking dry upon his cross the cup of judicial madness these retributions mix in the hearts of his enemies; and then, once more, let them note how he carefully refuses to subvert the retributive causalities of God's judicial order in souls, even though it be to accomplish their deliverance—let him bring together these most weighty tributes of honor, added by Christ to the majesty of law, and whether he shall call them compensations or not (for it makes very little difference by what name he calls them) he will certainly not be concerned any more, lest God, in the forgiveness of sins, may have sacrificed the honors of his authority, or the majesty of his justice. All this too, without any fiction of abhorrence expressed, justice satisfied, official transfer made of guilt, official substitution suffered in the matter of punishment. There is no theologic shuffle, in which persons, and characters, and sentiments of right, and dues of wrong, are confounded, but every thing is left just as it stands, in the facts of the history; making its own impressions, mocked by no subtleties, weakened by no moonshine of scholastic science.

As I have made much, in this treatise, of the suffering element in Christ's sacrifice, regarding mainly his moral suffering, and that as an expression of the suffering sensibility of God towards his enemies; and as I have just now magnified, in like manner, the suffering of Christ under the retributive and corporate evils of the curse, I ought perhaps to make some reference to a

scheme of substitution, or compensation, different from the others of which I have spoken. For it is a somewhat curious fact, that we have a late treatise of our own—much commended and really more deserving than any modern treatise I have seen—which describes a mode of compensation, executed in Christ, where the suffering of God in the punishment of the wicked, is made up, or substituted, by His equal suffering in the cross of Jesus. It does not appear to be observed that the treatise of Mr. Burge has this peculiarity; but he states very distinctly the fact, that God, in his punishments, evinces his respect for his law, by the amount of evil he is seen to endure in those punishments; and then proceeds—"By God's submitting to an evil, is meant his consenting that a thing should take place, which must be, in its own nature, disagreeable to his benevolent heart, if received independently of all other things. The misery of mankind, which would have been the effect of the execution of the law, would have been such an evil. * * * If then the sufferings of Christ were really an evil in the sight of God, and he submitted to them on account of his law, it must be evident that they are sufficient to show respect for his law. These sufferings must have been an evil of very great magnitude. Hence, for God to submit to such an evil on account of his law, must be a manifestation of respect to it exceedingly great."*

Burge's new theory of compensation by divine suffering.

* The Atonement, Discourses and Treatises, by Prof. Park, pp 458–60.

We seem to be coming out here upon a scheme of compensation, which, at least, involves no offense to our natural sentiments of right; but the prospect vanishes too soon to allow us any space for congratulation. The little clause "on account of his law," will be observed in the language cited; and the implication is that Christ must needs suffer, on account of the law, in order that God's suffering for him and with him should go to the same account with the suffering he would undergo in punishment. And then, regarding the suffering of Christ as being somehow on account of the law, the argument goes off upon the revealing of God's "opposition to sin," and his "displeasure against sinners," ending virtually, after all, in a way of compensation by abhorrence as it is commonly held. If Mr. Burge, perceiving the full import and merit of the conception he began with, could have had the firmness not to be swerved from his point by deference to existing opinions, his new base of compensation, by which one kind of moral suffering in God is substituted by another, would have allowed him to erect a complete superstructure of his own, and one that should be nowise revolting to right. But he seems to have not conceived the fine possibility it gave him.

In the general view I have thus given of the compensations, and especially in taking the position that God's law and justice are sufficiently vindicated in Christ, saying nothing of compensations at all, I anticipate two objections—

1st Obj. That the christian world is unanimous in the belief that Christ has offered a compensation to the justice of God, and that such compensation is necessary, as a ground for the forgiveness of sins. There is some truth in this, and I have no pleasure in a raising a conflict with any so generally accepted faith or opinion. But I have (1.) made up as large an account of compensations as any one can desire, if a compensation must be provided; and (2.) I have it to say, that whatever agreement there may be in respect to the need of a compensation, there is no agreement as to the mode; and (3.) that, for the first thousand years of the church, there was nothing said of any compensation at all, except that the suffering death of Christ was a compensation paid to the devil; and (4.) that Anselm, at whom this notion of a compensation to God begins, only makes up an argument in which God's violated honor is compensated by the obedience unto death of his incarnate Son, conceiving the fact of no compensation at all to God's justice or the want of any—much as, in the previous chapter, I have shown what honor God has put upon the law-precept, by Christ's obedience, and here upon the penalty, by his incarnate submission to the curse or the natural retributions of God. How much is left of the objection after a specification like this, I am not anxious to inquire.

Christian world unanimous for compensation.

2d Obj. That the view here advanced will not satisfy the strong substitutional, or imputational phrases applied to Christ in the scripture. Exactly contrary to

this, I am clear in the conviction, that it has the particular merit of giving to all such forms of scripture expression, their most easy and genuinely natural meaning, and that, without doing any offense to the standards of our moral nature. There is a kind of legerdemain, or word-shuffle practice, in such phrases; by which Christ is shown to be set in the very condition, or it will even be said in the very guilt of sinners, having their sins really put upon him, to be answered for by him in suffering before God's justice, and to satisfy that justice. If it were necessary to reason with attempts that are themselves even shocking violations of reason, it should be enough to say, that Christ is either really in the lot of ill desert, or else he is not. If he is there, then he ought to suffer; and if he is not, then it is the greatest wrong and irreverence to pretend that he suffers justly. I have dared to say that he is not there, and suffers nothing as justly due to himself. He only comes into the corporate evil of sin, as being incarnated into humanity, and, working there to recover men away, both from sin and punishment, he, for so long a time, encounters and suffers the curse they are justly under. This he does, not to satisfy God's justice, but in a way of coming at their consciences and hearts; whereupon it results that they, being released or recovered, by so great expense of suffering and sacrifice, give him their testimony of thanks, in the most natural way possible, by telling how he "was made a curse for them," "bore their sins in his own body," "gave himself for them,"

Substitutional phrases of scripture not met.

"was made sin for them," "gave himself to be their ransom," "died for them," "suffered the just for the unjust."

An illustration of the substitutive language.

The case is one we can not parallel, but suppose—no matter if the like was never heard of—that some state, the Roman for example, has contrived a prison for the punishment of public malefactors, on the plan of an ordeal by Providence. The prison is placed in the region of some deadly miasma, that we will say of the campagna; the design being to let every convict go free, after some given numbers of years are passed; on the ground that, being still alive, he must have learned to govern himself for so long a time, and is also marked for life and liberty by the acceptance of Providence. The fell poison of the atmosphere decimates, of course, the number of the prisoners, almost every week. Finally it comes to the knowledge of a certain good monk of the city, who has learned to follow his Master, that a notable prisoner who, a long time ago, was his bitter private enemy, begins to show the working of the poison, and is giving way to the incipient burnings of the fever. Whereupon the godly servant says "this man was my enemy, and for Christ's sake I must go to him, trying, if I can, to save him." Becoming thus the prisoner's faithful nurse and attendant, he is recovered and goes free, and the benefactor takes the infection and dies. And now the rescued man throws out his soul on words, trying vainly to express the inexpressible tenderness of his obligation. He writes, and

talks, and sings, nothing but gratitude, all his life long; telling how the Christly man saved him, by what poor figures he can raise. "O he bore my punishment"—"became the criminal for me"—"gave his life for mine"—"died that I might live"—"stood in my lot of guilt"—"suffered all my suffering." It will not be strange, if he should even go beyond scripture and testify in the fervors of his homage to so great kindness—"he took my debt of justice"—"satisfied the claims of justice for me;" for he will mean, by that, nothing more than he has meant by all he has been saying before. Then, after a time, when he and his benefactor are gone, some one, we will imagine, undertakes to write their story; and the dull, blind-hearted literalizer takes up all these fervors of expression, in the letters and reported words of the rescued felon, showing most conclusively from them, that the good monk actually got the other's crime imputed to him, took the guilt of it, suffered the punishment, died in his place, and satisfied the justice of the law that he might be released! Why the malefactor himself would even have shuddered, at the thought of a construction so revolting, hereafter to be put upon his words! The honors won for Christian theology, by this kind of interpretation put upon the free words of scripture, make a very sad figure, and are better to be lost than preserved. I do not, to speak frankly, know a passage of scripture, that can with any fairness be turned to signify a legal or judicial substitution of Christ, in the place of transgressors—none that, taken with only a proper Christian intelli-

gence, can be understood as affirming, either the fact, or the necessity, of a compensation made to God's justice, for the release of sin.

These law factors necessary, in the moral-power construction of the gospel.

If now we take the material of this and the two previous chapters, apart from any thought or proposed scheme of compensation for the release of punishment, we can not fail to see the immense importance and absolute integral necessity of it, in a gospel that proposes to quicken and spiritually restore the world. Not even the transcendent moral power over mankind, which Christ has obtained by his incarnate life and sacrifice, can have any sufficient sway, save as it is complemented, authenticated, and sharpened into cogency, by the sturdy law-work of these three chapters.

It is one of the most remarkable facts in the history of christian doctrine, that what the critical historians call the "moral view" of the atonement, in distinction from the expiatory, has been so persistently attempted, and so uniformly unsuccessful. The discouragements of failure appear to signify nothing; still the attempt is renewed, age after age, as if pushed on by some sublime fatality that can not be resisted. And what shall we see in this sublime fatality, but the felt pressure of truth, thrusting on attempts to issue the truth in some right form? What also shall we see in so great persistency under failure, but a pledge of final success? And we are the more confident of this, in the revision of these three chapters, that we are able so

clearly to see, why the attempts at a moral construction of the sacrifice, such as have heretofore been made, should have failed. They have been partial, they have not included matter enough to make any complete gospel, or to maintain any permanent hold, as a power, in men's convictions. They begin to wane as they begin to live, and shortly die for want of any complete apparatus of life. One proposes Christ as an example. Another imagines that his work is exhausted in correcting the superstition, or false opinion, that God will not forgive sin; and so allowing God's paternity to be accepted. Another shows him to be the teacher of a divine morality that must needs restore the world. Another beholds, in his life and death, the manifested love of God. Others follow in varieties that combine some, or all, of the proposed modes of benefit, and fill out, as they conceive, the more complete account of his moral efficacy. The inherent weakness of all such versions of the gospel is, that they look to see it operate by mere benignities—something is either to be shown or done, that is good enough to win the world.

The one fatal defect that vitiates all such conceptions and puts them under a doom of failure is that they make up a gospel which has no law side of authority, penal enforcement, rectoral justice; nothing to take hold of an evil mind at the point of its indifference or averseness to good, nothing to impress conviction, or shake the confidence, or stop the boldness of transgression. Doubtless it is something great, a wonderful and chief

element, that Christ unbosoms the Suffering Love of God, and obtains a name and power, in that manner, so transcendent; and yet not even he himself appears to put this captivating figure first in order, in the working plan, or economy of his gospel. On the contrary, we may distinctly see, when he comes to the end of his ministry, that he expects the dispensation of the Spirit now to begin, as he retires, in a cogent, piercing, fearfully appalling work, that is far as possible from any thing captivating or benignant. And yet even this will be, in a sense, by him and by his cross. "And when he is come he shall reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come." How of sin? "because they believe not on me." How of righteousness? "because I go to the Father and ye see me no more." How of judgment? "because the prince of this world is judged." In these thunders he will be revealed, and by these mighty shocks of inward convulsion, he will open a passage for his love and beauty to enter. For what honor is there on the precept of God's law, when Jesus personates it in his life! and how dreadfully, visibly base is the sin, that can attack that life and do a deed of murder on it! Well might the poor maddened multitude, overwhelmed by unutterable convictions of wrong in what they have done, go home smiting on their breasts! And the righteousness of God—what opinion shall they have, now, either of it, or of themselves, when they conceive him ascending to the Father? He came out from the righteousness of God, verily he lived it in the world, and now he has

gone up clad in its honors to reign. And the justice of God—what is now so visible, as that the cross itself is God's mightiest deed of judgment? for here goes down, as by a thunderstroke, the prince of this world—all the organically dominating powers of evil; its fashions, its pride, its pomps of condition, its tremendous codes of false opinion, all its lies, all its usurpations. These overgrown tyrannies upon souls are hurled, like Dagon, to the ground; and Pilate and the priests, and the senators, and the mob, and the soldiers, are all seen choking in dumb silence, before the cross and the judgment-day quaking and blackness of the scene. Poor sinning mortals! how weak do they look! how like to culprits judged!

In all which, we have, according to the conception of Christ himself, what exactly corresponds to the matter of these three rugged chapters of government. Expecting, as he does, to draw all men, by the captivating love and grace of his sacrifice, he has no such thought as that the moral power of his life will do any thing by itself. There must be law, conviction, judgment, fear, taking hold of natures dead to love, and by this necessary first effect, preparing a way for love. No effective and firm hold of the world as world, does he even hope to get, save as he breaks the shell of the world's audacity and blunted feeling, by these piercing rigors of conviction—doing visibly and suffering all that he does and suffers, in a way to honor the precept, enforce the penalty, and sanctify the justice of law; the precept as right, the penalty as righteous, the justice as the

fit vindication of the righteousness of God. No moral-view account of his gospel, separated from this, can be any thing but a feeble abortion. In this firm conjunction, his wonderful life and the name he has obtained, which is above every name, become the power of God unto salvation—thus and not otherwise.

CHAPTER VII.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

And yet the great Moral Power obtained by Christ for the reconciliation of men to God, fortified and buttressed by these vigorous law-factors of which I have been speaking, is obviously still no absolute or complete power, as regards the result proposed. No moral power ever goes to its mark in that way. The force or fiat-power of God strikes directly through, by its own cogency, but his moral power works only by inducement; that is, by impressions, or attractions that may be resisted; for it is not one of the possibilities, that character should be struck out, by any exterior action that does not act through choice or faith, in the subject. That would be not only a miracle, but a morally absurd miracle. Moral power therefore, acting by itself, always falls inevitably short of the result proposed, appearing thus, in one view, to be scarcely any real power at all. The grandest, most ineffable kind of power—in Christ a glory most visibly divine or deific—it still bears a look of insufficiency, whenever it moves on a moral nature that will not suffer it to be sufficient. But where it wins consent, or faith, it is not so; there it is visibly,

Moral power supposes the consent of faith.

consciously, power, bearing some of the highest attributes of sovereignty; even transforming the subject all through, in the deepest secrets of impulse; creating, as it were, new possibilities of character, new springs of liberty in good. Beginning in the plane of inducement, or attraction, it no sooner wins consent, or faith, than it becomes inspiration; bearing the soul up out of its thraldom and weak self-endeavor, to be a man newborn, ranging in God's freedom, and consciously glorious sonship.

And this, if I am right, is the very greatest thing done below the stars, evincing the greatest power. The subject is reconnected herein with the divine nature, atoned, reconciled with God, transformed by the inward touch of God's feeling and character. This, if any thing, is power, the power of God unto salvation. Only it is by the supposition a salvation by faith. Winning faith, it works by the faith it wins; and so, being trusted in, it makes the trust a new footing of life and character.

Justification by faith is the result proposed.

Now it is this new footing of faith, or salvation by faith, which the New Testament Scriptures call JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH. Not that men were never justified by faith before—they were never justified in any other way, never saved on any other footing. The Old Testament saints, and as truly the outside saints, of whom I believe there have been many besides Jethro and Job and Cornelius, were all justified by faith. They were such as, not knowing Christ, trusted themselves practi-

cally to God as their Helper and Keeper; or not knowing God, trusted themselves implicitly to some supernatural Helper felt to be near, and accepted as their Unknown Friend. We only speak of justification by faith in Christ, as a new footing of salvation, because there is such a power obtained for God, by the human life and death of Christ, and the new enforcements of his doctrine, as begets a new sense of sin, provokes the sense of spiritual want, and, when trust is engaged, creates a new element of advantage and help, to bring the soul up into victory over itself and seal it as the heir of God. And thus it is, or in a sense thus qualified, that we speak of justification by faith, as the grand result of Christ's work, and the all-inclusive grace of his salvation.

Holding this view of Christ and his gospel, we can see beforehand, that justification by faith will even be a principal matter of Christianity; and then it will not be strange, if some should glorify it more as an idol of dogmatic opinion, and others more as a footing of grace and divine liberty. It will be dear to many living in their heads and supervising the gospel as thinkers, because it is the *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ;* but a great deal more dear, to a much greater number, as the point where Jesus practically meets their want, and becomes a new celestial confidence in their faith. What however it means, may not be very exactly understood or agreed, between those who prize it as a church article, and those who value it as the new

Practical faith and church opinion may not wholly coincide.

footing and spring of their spiritual liberty—the justification of life. Nay, it will not be strange, if some whose souls are most kindled by the grace of it, should nevertheless make a church article of it that is quite inconsistent, or even revolting. In my present chapter, therefore, I shall endeavor to gather in what light I can from the previous chapters, upon this truly principal matter of the Christian salvation.

The single text of Scripture at which the doctrine begins, and in which, we may almost say that it ends, though hundreds of other passages bring in their consenting evidence, is the much debated testimony of Paul *—"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

The principal text discussed.

The first clause of the passage, relating to propitiation, will be considered more properly in another chapter. At present, our concern is to settle the true meaning of the remaining part, relating to the righteousness of God, and the dispensation of his justifying mercy.

The mere English reader will not know, that the three words here occurring, *righteousness*, *just*, and *justifier of*—noun, adjective, and participle —are all words of the same root in the original, and, of course, are as closely related in mean-

The three words all of one family.

* Romans iii, 25–6.

ing, as they can be in so many different parts of speech, that are grammatical offshoots of the same root. Informed of this, he will ask, at once, why the three words are not translated so as to preserve the impression of their kinship?—thus to read, either "the righteousness of God," "that he may be righteous and make righteous," or else, the "justice of God, that he may be just and the justifier of"—so to reflect the apostle's meaning, in the exact one color he gave it, by his three co-relative words in the Greek? I hardly know what answer to make to this question, unless it be that the text had been already warped, by a dogmatic construction, before the translation was made. This, however, is not quite certain; for the latter class of words from the Latin—justice, just and justify—are commonly used in the translation in precisely the same meaning as the former class from the Saxon—righteousness, righteous and make righteous. I say "commonly used," but they are not always so used; for the Romans had two senses, very distinct from each other, when they spoke of justice. They were a very intensely legal people, and they sometimes meant by justice, justice under political analogies—vindicatory and forensic justice—and sometimes justice in the moral sense; that is, righteousness. The Greek word or class of words, never means justice and just under political analogies, but always moral justice; that is uprightness, or rightness of principle. Hence the mixing of both classes of words in the translation of this text, so as to read "righteousness" and "just" and "the justifier of,"

wears a suspicious look, and is, to say the least, unfortunate, because of the ambiguity it creates.

Still no very great detriment will be suffered, if due care is taken always to understand the words *just* and *justify* as having, like the word *righteousness* that precedes them, a purely moral significance—that God is just, as being righteous, and justifies, simply as communicating his own character and becoming a righteousness upon us. Unhappily this caution is not observed by theologians, and these two words are construed very commonly by them, under the judicial analogies; as if there were a fixed attribute in God called his justice, which is immutably set for the vindication of right, and the redress of wrong, by deserved punishments. "That he might be just" therefore "and the justifier," is taken as if there were some adversative relation between the clauses, or as if it read "just *and yet* the justifier" &c.—Christ having so exactly satisfied the immutable justice, by his sufferings, that God appears to be just as ever, even though he justifies, or passes judgment in favor of, those who deserve nothing but punishment.

It will be seen accordingly that a right view of Christian justification will depend, to a great extent, on a proper and true understanding of the three staple words referred to. I propose therefore at the outset, and before offering any construction of the passage in question, to pause on the words themselves, and show, by a sufficiently careful investigation, what is their true meaning.

The Old Testament has two words, one a moral and

spiritual, and the other a judicial, which, as was noted in the last chapter,* are very commonly used in conjunction, yet never appear to cross, or get confused, in their meaning. Our present concern is with the first. It means originally *straight* just as our Saxon word *right* and the Latin word *rectus* denote, in their symbol, a straight line; that being nature's type of moral rightness, or rectitude. Now this moral word of the Old Testament is translated, taking noun, adjective, and verb, either *righteousness*, *righteous*, and *being right;* or *justice*, *just*, and *being just.* The noun is translated *righteousness* more times than can well be numbered, and *justice* in the moral sense of righteousness at least twenty-five times—never, that I have been able to discover, in any judicial, or vindicatory sense. The adjective is translated *righteous* still more frequently, and *just*, in the sense of morally *upright*, or *righteous*, about fifty times—never as just, in the retributive and judicial sense. The verb, which is here the principal matter of debate, is translated *to be upright*, *holy*, *true*, *honest*, *innocent*—all words of moral significance—also finally to *justify.* Here only does it take on even a semblance of judicial character; and the semblance is, to say the least, extremely doubtful here. The Hebrew grammar, it may be necessary to observe, has a causative mood for the verb, which is called the Hiphil. Thus the Indicative *he is right*, becomes in the Hiphil, *he causes to be right*, *makes right*, or *righteous.* We have

How the three words stand in the Old Testament.

* Vide note p. 382.

three terminations that give a Hiphil power in English, *ize* [harmon-ize] from the Greek, *fy* [sancti-fy] from the Latin, and *en* [hard-en] from the Saxon. But our English verb *to be right* had never taken a Hiphil form, or power, and for this reason, perhaps, the translators passed over, in many instances, to the Latin word *justify*, adopting that; though they sometimes manufacture a phrase that carries the causative meaning. Thus, instead of saying in Daniel, "they that justify many," they say "they that turn many to righteousness."* And yet when they come to Isaiah they read—"by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many;† when the meaning is exactly as before—"turn many to righteousness." Plainly enough, in both these cases, there is no thought of the many being made even with God's law, or judicially acquitted, but only of their being made righteous. It is as if the very un-English expression were used—"shall right-en," or "shall be the righteousser of, many."

It may readily be seen that, out of this causative or Hiphil use, there will be a sliding naturally into the idea of *passing as righteous;* because, in that, we only make righteous to ourselves; and then this passing as righteous will have a certain look of justifying judicially, in the sense of acquittal. "He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me?"‡—where the idea is, neither that God makes right, nor that he acquits and absolves, but simply that he passes, or approves as right. Hence the pertinence of the question

* Dan. xii, 3. † Isa. liii, 11. ‡ Isa. l, 8.

—"who will contend with me?" or show me to be wrong? In two other cases * we encounter the expression "justify the righteous;" where, of course, there is no righteoussing of such as are not, neither is there any more a justifying in the sense of acquitting or absolving; but there is simply a passing of the righteous as righteous. In three other cases † we find the expression—"justify the wicked" where the very point of the charge is that the wicked are taken to favor, passed as righteous, and so that moral distinctions, not forensic, are confounded. There is here no reference whatever to any judicial defection, save through the moral of which it is a result. On the whole I do not know an example in the Old Testament, where the original moral word above referred to, whether translated righteousness, righteous, and be right, or justice, just, and justify, is used in any but a properly moral sense.

How they stand in the New Testament.

We come now to the Greek word of the New Testament, the same which is translated righteousness, just, and justify, in the particular passage I am debating. Here we find the noun [δικαιοσυνη] always translated *righteousness*, never *justice;* for justice is a word which does not once occur in the New Testament; the adjective [δικαιος,] translated about fifty times righteous; and just in the moral sense ("condemned and killed the just") ‡ about thirty times, never once in a judicial, unless it be in the passage we have under examination; also the verb

* Deut. xxv, 1, and 1 Kings viii, 32.

† Ex. xxiii, 7; Prov. xvii, 15; Is. v, 23. ‡ James v, 6.

[δικαιοω,] always translated to *justify*, because we have no other Hiphil word to fill the place; still showing clearly always, by the collocation it is in, as here, that it has a moral force only, just as it has in the Old Testament. Taking this very sentence then—"to declare his righteousness that he might be just and the justifier"—who can imagine that the two latter words, just and justifier, are words to be turned away from their family relation in the very same sentence, and made to carry a forensic or judicial meaning? There was never such an example of bad writing in the world. Besides it may be safely affirmed, that no hardest possible strain of labor put upon this causative or Hiphil word, to justify, can make it carry, at all, the complicated, artificial notion of *such* a justifying—that which justifies, without either making any body just, or accepting any body as being just, but only passes a verdict of *quasi* justice, on grounds of penal suffering not personal in the subject, but contributed by another. Why if the transgressor had borne his own suffering, and had perfectly filled up the measure of it, who can imagine a fiction so extravagant, as that he should be called a just man? He would not even be forensically just, any more than a malefactor who has served out his sentence.

Uses and conceptions of Plato.

I ought perhaps to note, in this connection, the very intensely, mysteriously moral impression held by such a writer as Plato, when he speaks of right, or righteousness; or, if so he is translated, of the just, or justice. "Justice," he says, "is the virtue of the soul, injustice its vice. The just

soul then and the just man will live well."* In the same connection he speaks of the harmonizing effect on the moral nature, calling righteousness, or justice, "a correct arrangement of the parts of the soul towards each other, or about each other." He recurs again and again to a discussion of right, or justice, and gets lost in the mystery, not finding how to conceive it. He represents Socrates in a discourse upon it, telling how he has inquired of many, and has only been sunk in greater doubts by their answers—this only is clear that they all conceive it as a certain divine something, going through all things, to rule them by its unseen sway. One whom he questions goes into the etymology of the word δικαιος, conceiving that it was originally διαϊὸν, because it goes through and governs all things, and that the κ was inserted "for elegant enunciation." Another, consulting the mysteries, found it to mean the same as *cause;* viz., a power to rule and set in order. Another referred it to the *sun*, because it had a pervading and heating and all-nourishing power. Another, for a like reason, took it to be a certain divine *fire* in the soul. Another took it as a kind of piercing world-soul, that, like the soul of Anaxagoras, mingled with nothing, yet pervaded all things. Whereupon affectingly baffled by so many sublime guesses, he gives over the search, declaring that he is now in greater doubt and mystery of thought, than before he undertook to learn what justice is.† How far off now, in all these wondering, almost adoring struggles of thought, is this great teacher, from even so

* Republic, Lib. I., Cap. 24. † Cratylus.

much as the faintest mental reference to any judicial analogies! Could he have conceived the right, as everlasting, necessary idea, a law before all government, going through, as it were, even God and God's perfections, and so through all moral natures, he would, at least, have found the Monarch Principle of the universe; in that also, some fit point of rest for his inquiries. Even the groping in which we have just followed him, the lofty burning mystery he is in, were a preparation now sublime, how almost sacred, for the apostle's doctrine of the cross, when he says—"Whom God hath set forth to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins." The transcendent principle he could not find, yet even worshipfully sought, is there discovered—a law, as Hooker conceives, "laid up in the bosom of God."*

* I have said nothing, in this verbal disquisition, of a very singular philological anomaly, that occurs, in the etymology of this word δικαιοσυνη. Used, as far as I have been able to discover, in an exclusively moral sense, it appears, and is taken by the lexicographers, to be of the same root, as another family of words, that have none but a vindictive and intensely judicial meaning. Thus we have δικη translated *vengeance*, *punishment*, and the like; ενδικος *just*, in the sense of justly deserved; εκδικεω to *avenge*, or *revenge*; καταδικαζω to *condemn*. Now this forensic family and the moral family are supposed, both together, to be derived from the Sanscrit radical *dik*, which means to *show*, and is the undoubted root of the Greek word δεικνυμι, which also means to *show*. And perhaps we get a clue in this, to the manner in which both the families above referred to raise their meaning. For to show is to spread out, to level, or, as we say, to *ex-plain*. And this kind of figure associates well with the true straight line of rectitude, and also with the even impartiality of retributive justice; as when the prophet says—"Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the

We come back thus upon the apostle's great text of justification, to settle, if we can, the true construction of its meaning. And it could hardly be more clear, I think, that none of the words here grouped together, *righteousness*, *just*, *justifier of*, are to receive a judicial, or judicially vindicative meaning; which, again, is but another form of the conclusion that, in Christian justification, there is no reference of thought whatever to the satisfaction of God's retributive justice, or to any acquittal passed on guilty men, because the score of their account with God's justice has been made even by the sufferings of Christ. The justification spoken of is a moral affair, related only to faith in the subject, and the righteousness of God, operative in or through his faith. In this conviction we shall be farther confirmed, if we take up each of the three co-relative words and follow them into their relational uses.

The three words, then, are moral not judicial.

1. *The righteousness of God.* Many teachers appear to understand this expression, in the particular case now in hand, as meaning, in fact, the vindicatory justice of God. God declares his justice, they conceive, in the penal sufferings of Christ, so that he can remit the sins

plummet." In the same way it comes to pass, that Solon calls the calm, smooth sea, "*the right* [δικαῖον] sea." Xenophon also calls a jolting chariot a "*not right* [not level] chariot," in the same way. Virgil too calls the outspread, even plain, "*justissima tellus*." Whatever may be true, in this very singular problem of etymology, the two great families, the moral and judicial, are certainly distinct in their meaning, and there is no fair pretext for carrying over a judicial meaning to the moral family, on the ground of their etymological relationship.

that are past and keep his justice good. If so, there is no other such use of the term. We do not read "the justice of God which is by faith;"* nor "by the justice of one the free gift came upon all;"† nor "going about to establish their own justice, have not submitted themselves to the justice of God;"‡ nor "the justice of God unto all, and upon all them that believe."§ These passages all turn upon the word *righteousness*, and if we substitute their meaning by that of justice, they only become absurd, or even revolting.

No judicial meaning in the righteousness of God.

2. *That he might be just.* Here it is often conceived, that God must needs keep himself just, in men's convictions; that is just in the judicial and vindicatory sense, as the avenger of transgression, else he can not forgive, or justify. The English word *just* occurs only twice in the New Testament, in this retributive and judicial sense, where it translates, not δικαιος, the moral word, but ενδικος, a word always retributive.‖ Meantime, in the more than thirty other examples, where it translates δικαιος, it means simply just in the sense of right, or righteous, and can not be made to mean any thing else. In the phrase we are now debating, therefore, we can not understand the word *just* to mean retributively, forensically just, without supposing that, in this one single use, the original word has forgotten its meaning—which is the most unlikely thing possible. Besides, the ad-

The being just not judicially meant.

* Rom. iii, 22. † Rom. v, 18. ‡ Rom. x, 3. § Rom. iii, 22.
‖ Just now referred to in the note, p. 414.

versative construction that goes almost necessarily with the idea of a retributive meaning in the epithet *just*, is favored by nothing in the grammar, but is forbidden rather. It does not read—"that he might be just [retributively] and *yet* justify," but "that he might be just *and* justify;" that is that he might be so conspicuously, gloriously righteous, as to communicate righteousness to every believer. Neither will it signify any thing to say that, in undertaking to be so conspicuously righteous, he will rather repel than draw, and of course will do any thing but communicate; for though there may be something appalling in the perfect and pure righteousness of God, it is also, in another view, a character most tender, benignant, and patient. If I were a wholly righteous man, given up to right in a perfect and unfaltering homage, I should certainly forgive my enemy for that reason. And in just this way an apostle conceives the righteousness of God, saying—"faithful and just [that is, righteous] to forgive us our sins."* His opinion of God's righteousness is such, that he even grounds the confidence of forgiveness in it. And another apostle grounds the confidence of a most tender treatment of the undeserving, on the same idea of God's righteousness, saying—"God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, in that ye have ministered to the saints," &c.† Fallen sadly away from their faith, he even conceives that God will have it still as a point of righteousness, to remember their good deeds and make more of them than they deserve. In this way, God will

* 1 John i, 9. † Heb. vi, 10.

have declared his righteousness in Christ—shown himself righteous, even to the extent of putting righteousness upon every one that believeth.

3. *And the justifier of.* Here we have the causative mood of the Old Testament word reappearing in the New. And there is no example, that I know, where it carries a judicial meaning; though there is, of course, a large variety of meaning in the uses. When it is declared that men shall "justify God," it certainly does not mean the same thing as when God is said "to justify the ungodly;" and yet there is a closer approach of meaning, in the two cases, than might, at first, be supposed. When men justify God, they pass him righteous, and when God justifies the ungodly, he passes them righteous—only he becomes, besides, the righteousness upon them that makes it true. The justification is purely moral in the first case, because no justification but a moral one is here possible; and that, in the second, there is no thought of a judicial acquittal, on account of penal compensations paid by Christ, will be most conclusively shown from the fact that the common uses of the word so plainly relate to what is moral only. Thus it is declared, by our apostle, in the very discussion we are having in review, that Abraham "believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness;"* and the very particular matter of promise on which he believed, being so justified by his faith, is given us expressly; viz., that he should have an heir to perpetuate his family. He is justified, we

The justifying not judicial.

* Rom. iv, 3, 20–22.

can see, by simply being brought nigh enough to God in his faith, to be the friend of God, and become invested in God's righteousness. This justification again is called "the justification of life,"* supposing evidently the fact of some life-giving power in the dispensation of it; and where is the life-giving of a mere acquittal, passed on the ground that the bad account of sin is made even? Again Christ is declared to have been "delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification."† But if the whole matter of the justification depends on what he has suffered for our offenses, we shall as certainly be justified, or have our account made even, if he does not rise, as if he does. Doubtless the rising has an immense significance, when the justification is conceived to be the renewing of our moral nature in righteousness; for it is only by the rising that his incarnate life and glory are fully discovered, and the righteousness of God declared in his person, in its true moral power. But in the other view of justification, there is plainly enough nothing depending, as far as that is concerned, on his resurrection. When, again, he is himself declared, though "manifest in the flesh" and subject to its low estate, to be "justified in the spirit,"‡ what does it mean but that his higher life is seen to be invested with the evident righteousness of God—inwardly just, or justified? To imagine that he is only declared to be legally acquitted, judicially justified, is quite impossible. When again we read—"but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the

* Rom. v, 18. † Rom. iv, 25. ‡ 1 Tim. iii, 16.

name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God"* —what is the very subject matter of the declaration, but the moral renewing of the soul? Besides, "the Spirit of God" is conceived to be concerned in the justifying spoken of; as he certainly could not be and is never even supposed to be, in the doctrine of a mere compensational and judicial justification.

Having now these three main points of the apostle's language made out and established, in a manner that leaves no room for dispute, we need also to notice, in a very brief manner, two or three of the subordinate points which affect the general meaning. The expression "*to declare*," is rather insufficient. The original, very forcible expression is, "*for the in-showing*" [ενδειξιν,] that is, "for producing an effective impression of, the righteousness of God." For every thing, as regards a justifying effect depends, it will be seen, on the powerful demonstration made of God's righteousness, in the incarnate life and death of Christ. It appears to be a matter of doubt, with the commentators, whether the phrase, "through the forbearance of God," is to be connected with the participial clause, "that are past," or with the clause, "for the remission." But the participle, "that are past," does not mean "that are passed by," but only 'that took place in past time." To conceive, therefore, that the sins took place, by the forbearance of God, is too weak to be a true conjunction. Say, instead, "for the remission, by God's forbearance, of sins in the ages

The "declaring" and the "remission" explained.

* 1 Cor. vi, 11.

past;" and the vigor of good sense returns. There appears to have been a fear of saying "the remission of sins by God's forbearance," lest it might not be the true theology. It is not considered, perhaps, how the declaration of God's righteousness will have covered up that laxity, if laxity there was.

We read the whole passage then as follows—"To declare [that is, demonstrate, inwardly impress] his righteousness, for the remission, by God's forbearance, of sins heretofore committed; to declare [demonstrate,] I say, for this present time, his righteousness, that he might be righteous [stand full before us in the evident glory of his righteousness] and the justifier [righteousser] of him that believeth in Jesus."

The true version.

If any apology is necessary for using again this very ungrammatical, mock-English substitute for the word "*justifier*," it must be that, without some such device, I do not see in what way I can steer my exposition exactly enough, through the close and perilous strait between the Catholic doctrine on one hand, and the Protestant on the other, to avoid an appearance of lapsing in this or that—when both, in fact, are only unsuccessful attempts to exhibit the true gospel idea. The Catholic says, "making righteous;" the Protestant says, "declaring to be righteous;" neither of which is the exact conception of Christian justification. The Christian is not a man made righteous in himself, or in his own habit; neither is he a man held to be righteous, when he is not, by what is called a "*declaratio pro justo;*" for

Catholic and Protestant versions both considered.

it is no fitting way, for a gospel of divine mercy, to end off in a fiction that falsifies even the eternal distinctions of character. Hence there is wanted here a verb that we have not—even as the Greeks appear to have made one out of their adjective—so that we also may say, "that he might be righteous and the righteousser," &c.; for it is the peculiar and exact result of this outlandish word, that it describes a state, where the righteousness may be conceived as a flowing in of God's righteousness upon the believing soul, thus and forever to flow. The subject is not conceived to be made righteous personally, by infusion, and started off as an inherently right-going character, but is thought of as being held in everlasting confidence and right-going, because he is vitally connected, by his faith, with the inspirations of God, or of the righteousness of God. He is made righteous, using the Catholic words, in the sense that he is always to be so derivatively from the righteousness of God; accounted righteous, using the Protestant, in the sense that he is always being made so, by the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. And this is his condition of justification; his being always just because he always believes; never to be just, for a moment, after he ceases to believe.

In this careful exposition of what may be called the charter text of Christian justification, two points have been held in reserve for separate consideration; viz., the righteousness of God as related to justification; and the relation we ourselves have to God's righteousness, in the faith by which we are justified.

I. The righteousness of God as related to justification. The apostle, as we have already observed, makes much of the in-showing, or felt impression produced, of the righteousness of God; repeating, for the sake of emphasis—"to declare"—"to declare, I say, the righteousness of God"—first "for the remission of sins," and next "for the justifying," or righteoussing of sinners; evidently conceiving that, in the declaration, or impression made [ενδειξιν] of God's righteousness, lies all the principal value of his work.

The Righteousness of God as related to justification.

According to the common conception, his declaration of the righteousness of God prepares a *ground* of remission, or a *ground* of justification; and in that sense Christ obtains, by his death, the grace of remission, or of justification. Perhaps we shall find reason to believe, that Christ is a great deal more to us than a *ground;* viz., a *power* of the same things—in such sense a power that, if they were not wrought by him, they would never, in fact, be, at whatever cost of grounding they obtain a right to be.

Christ not a ground, but a power, of justification.

The very light notions prevalent concerning remission, or forgiveness, and especially in connection with the idea that Christ is concerned to prepare a ground of remission, make it necessary to revise our impressions at this point. It is a rather common question, whether God could forgive sins on the ground of our mere repentance, without any ground of compensation made to his justice? But if he

Light notions of remission.

could, meaning only what is commonly meant by remission, the remission would make no change and confer no benefit whatever. Besides the question only asks what God could bestow, if we should do the impossible? For no man is able, by his own act, to really cast off sin and renew himself in good; and to ask what God may do, in such a case, indicates a very superficial view both of sin and of remission.

What then is remission more sufficiently conceived? The word, both in Greek and English, is a popular word, which signifies, in common speech, a *letting go;* that is, a letting go of blame, a consenting to raise no impeachment farther and to have all wounded feeling dismissed. But though God accommodates our understanding, in the use of this rather superficial word, we can easily see, as I have already intimated in another place, that his relations to a sinning soul under his government, taken hold of, as it is already, by the retributive causes arrayed in nature itself for the punishment of transgression, are so different from those of a man to a wrong-doing fellow man, that a mere letting go, or consenting no longer to blame, really accomplishes nothing as regards the practical release of sin. It is only a kind of formality, or verbal discharge, that carries practically no discharge at all. It says "go" but leaves the prison doors shut.*

* Dr. Whitley says with great truth—"Remission of sin is not the mere cold reputative or forensic remission of a bond or debt; it is not a bare judicial, external discharge from the obligation of the law to positive pains and penalties; it is something more distinct and practical,

We ought to be sure beforehand, that the Scripture will not leave the matter here, but will somehow manage to strike a deeper key. And we find, as we go into the inquiry, that we have, at least, three distinct forms of expression given us, to accommodate our uses, according to the particular mode of thought by which we are, or are to be, exercised.

Three conceptions held by the Scripture.

Thus, if we are thinking of God's displeasure, or his feeling of blame, we have the word "*remission*," that speaks of releasing the blame; and we often use the much deeper word *forgiveness* in the same superficial sense.

If, again, we think of our sin as a state of moral incapacity and corruption, fastened upon us by the retributive causes which our sin has provoked, we are allowed to speak of "forgiveness" as the "taking away" of our sin; just as we may of being "healed," "washed," "reconciled," "delivered," "turned away," "made free." Here we conceive that God is able, in the declaration of his righteousness, to get such a hold of the souls that are weltering in disorder, under the natural effects of transgression, as to bring them out of their disorder into righteousness. By his moral power, which

something more present and homefelt within us—it is remission or liberation from the essential naughtiness, heinousness, and malignity of moral evil itself; for whilst all penal ire and positive infliction might be remitted and foreborne, the spiritual disease and death of the soul might remain in all their genuine horrors, in all their innate mischief and misery.' (*Atonement and Sacrifice*, Sect. 12.)

is the power of his righteousness supernaturally revealed in Christ, he masters the retributive causations of their nature, and they receive what is more than a *ground* of remission; viz., the executed fact of remission, or spiritual release. Otherwise, under a mere letting go, the bad causes hold fast like fire in brimstone, refusing to be cheated of their prey. The same is true of forgiveness; only when this same deliverance is called, in the English, "forgiveness," there appears to be a reference to the fact that Christ forgives, in the sense of giving himself for, the transgressor, to get so great power over him and be the power of God unto salvation upon him.*

If, again, we think of something higher and more sovereign, even than this executed release; if we want to get above all the condemnations of statutes, and the severe motivities or enforcements of instituted government itself; if we raise our thought, with a certain divine envy, to God, longing to be as little hampered as He, by fears and requirements and bad liabilities; then it is given us to know that we are "justified"—made and kept righteous, by the righteousness of God upon us, and reigning as a Divine Moral Power in us. And

* By a singular coincidence, other languages make their word of release out of the verb *to give*, in the same manner. Thus we have *condono, par-don, ver-geben*, accurately matching our English word *for-give*. A coincidence the more remarkable that the Greek word χαριζομαι, translated by our word *forgive*, has no reference to the figure of *giving* at all. Still Christ is put in this figure, [διδωμι ὑπερ,] many times over in the New Testament, and that perhaps is the sufficient explanation Gal. ii, 20; Eph. v, 25; 1 Tim. ii, 6; Tit. ii, 14; John vi, 51.

therefore it is that so much is made of "the declaring [in-showing] of the righteousness of God" by Christ; because, in real verity, our justification is to be the righteousness of God upon us. For this righteousness declared is but another name for the great Moral Power already shown to be obtained by Christ in his sacrifice. Beginning at the point of Christ's humanity, and tracing his course onward through death and the resurrection, he is obtaining, all the while, as man, a great Name and Power; till finally we see him culminate in absolute, deific perfection, or the righteousness of God. Beginning at the other pole, and conceiving him in deific perfection, or righteousness, which is by him to be declared, or made a power on men, we only describe inversely the same thing. In one case the humanity culminates in the righteousness of God; and in the other the righteousness of God is incarnated and declared in humanity. The result is an embodiment, in either case, of God's perfection in a human life and character, to be a new-creating, justifying power, and so a gospel.

Justification has no reference to justice.

Christian justification has, in this view, no reference whatever to justice under the political analogies, or to any compensation of justice. As respects the full, round conception of it, an immense advantage is gained by the distinction I have drawn, between the law before government, and the instituted government by which God undertakes the maintenance of it, and our final restoration to it. The righteousness of God is what God was, before the eternal, necessary law of his own nature

When we are justified by faith, or "by yielding our members instruments of righteousness unto God," which is the same thing, we are carried directly back into the recesses, so to speak, of God's eternity—back of all instituted government, back of the creation, back of the statutes, and penalties, and the coming wrath of guiltiness, and all the contrived machineries and means of grace, including in a sense even the Bible itself, and rested with God, on the base of His antecedent, spontaneous, immutable righteousness. We are taken by all the foundations of the world, and the governings, compulsions, fears, and judgments that make up the scaffolding of our existence, and have our relations, with God, only to the law before government; being in it, and the freedom of it, as being in Him and His freedom. In so far as we are still incomplete, statutes, penal enforcements, and all kinds of instituted means and machineries, are necessary to the mixed quality we are in; but in so far as we are in the righteousness of God, we are raised above them, into that primal law which God undertook, as the total object of his administration, to establish in created minds. We are thus united to God in the antecedent glories and liberties of his eternal character. The bondages and fears of our guiltiness are left behind. Being in God's righteousness, we also share the confidence of his integrity. And the work of righteousness, both for Him and for us, shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

This is justification with a meaning, and it is only

this, however we may conceive it, that makes our justification a state of peace and liberty, so unspeakably strong and triumphant. How artificial, and meager, and cold in comparison, is the justification which only means that justice is satisfied in Christ's pains, and that faith, seizing on that fact, concludes that punishment is escaped! This is justification as before justice—which is only one of God's means of government—not before the everlasting standard for which government exists. In other words, it is justification without righteousness; for if any thing is said of that, it appears to be only meant, that as good a footing is obtained for the soul without righteousness, *as if* it were righteous.

Objected that the liabilities of justice still remain.

But if justifying faith has no respect to the fact that justice is satisfied, then it will be objected that the liabilities of justice still remain. Undoubtedly they do, if by liabilities we mean the dues of justice; and our dues would be exactly the same if a ground of release were provided in the pains of another. That ground provided would not make the dues of penalty any the less due, in justice, from us. The objection here is created by an assumption that there is no deliverance from the claims of justice, save as they are legally compensated. What has been said of justice and penalty, in the four previous chapters, will sufficiently show the contrary, Besides, no soul that has felt the righteoussing power of God, and been raised to a conscious participation of his righteousness—set in his confidence, let forth unto his liberty—will assuredly want any other evidence.

Another kind of objection will occur to many; viz., that the righteousness of God is too severe and stern to have, when declared, any such attractive power over souls that are in wrong, and is most of all unfitted to become a new-creating force in their life. Such persons have been somehow accustomed to think of God's righteousness, as being one and the same thing with his justice, and their associations correspond. Instead of blessing themselves, and counting all souls blessed, in the fact that God is everlastingly right, having all the benignities, fidelities, integrities, and supreme glories of a perfect righteousness, they speak of it as being an appalling character, one that creates inevitable dread and revulsion; setting it forth *in terrorem*, not seldom, as a hard and fateful rigor opposite to love. Whereas righteousness, translated into a word of the affections, is love and love, translated back into a word of the conscience, is righteousness. We associate a more fixed exactness, it may be, and a stronger thunder of majesty with righteousness, but there is no repugnance between it and the very love itself of Christ. When Christ thinking of his death and resurrection, says that he will convince the world, in that manner, of righteousness, does he mean that he will not also draw the world by love? or does he rather mean that, raising the conviction of righteousness, he will draw the more powerfully? Nowhere, in fact, do we feel such a sense of the righteousness of God, as we do in the dying scene of Christ—"Certainly this was a righteous man"—and we only feel the more powerfully that God is a forgiving God.

Another objection that righteousness condemns and repels.

Indeed we have just the same opinion of righteousness in men—we only expect the more confidently to be forgiven, because the man we have injured is a righteous man. If I have an enemy who has done me a great personal wrong; if I can bring him to justice and make an example of him that will do much to honor the laws; if, too, I have a fire of natural indignation that, apart from all revenge, arms me against him and prepares me to see him suffer; shall I be false, therefore, to my own virtue, if I do not make him suffer? Calling this my instinct of justice, is it therefore a finality with me, beyond the control of reason and right? Is there no justice above justice, in which, as a righteous man, I am even bound to subordinate the lower ranges of vindictive impulse, and give myself tenderly to courses of patience and suffering sacrifice, that I may gain my enemy? Nay, if my vindicatory impulse should indeed assume to be my law, what can I do but call it a temptation of the devil, and betake myself to fasting if need be to subdue it?

Dismissing then all such false impressions, and taking the righteousness of God no more as a preventive to mercy, but as a ground of mercy rather, we begin to see how much it means that Christ, in becoming the moral power of God in his sacrifice, becomes, in another, but nowise contrary view, the righteousness of God declared. For in the original normal state of being, the righteousness of God was to be a power all-diffusive, a central, self radiating orb—Sun itself of Righteousness, shining

Justification restores the normal state of being.

abroad on all created minds and overspreading them, as it were, with the sovereign day of its own excellence. The plan never was that created beings should be righteous, in such a sense, by their own works, or their own inherent force, as not to be derivatively righteous and by faith. They had and were eternally to have, their righteoussing in God. Remaining upright, they would consciously have had their righteousness in God's inspirations, and would even have been hurt by a contrary suggestion.

Hence the dismal incapacity of sin; because it separates the soul from God's life-giving character and inspirations. Having Him no more, as the fontal source of righteousness, it falls off into an abnormal, self-centered state, where it comes under fears, and legal enforcements, and judicial wrath, and struggles vainly, if at all, to keep its account even, or recover itself to its own ideals. Works of the law, dead works carefully piled, will-works, works of supererogation, penances, alms, austerities of self-mortification—none of these, nor all of them, make out the needed righteousness. Still there is a felt deficiency, which the apostle calls "a coming short of the glory of God." Nothing will suffice for this, but to come back, finite to infinite, creature to Creator, and take derivatively what, in its nature, must be derivative; viz., the righteousness that was normally and forever to be, unto, and upon, all them that believe.

Here then is the grand renewing office and aim of the gospel of Christ. He comes to men groping in a state

of separation from God, consciously not even with their own standards of good, and, what is more, consciously not able to be—self-condemned when they are trying most to justify themselves, and despairing even the more, the more they endeavor to make themselves righteous by their own works—to such Christ comes forth, out of the righteousness of God, and also in the righteousness of God, that he may be the righteousness of God upon all them that believe, and are so brought close enough to him in their faith, to receive his inspirations. And this is the state of justification, not because some debt is made even, by the penal suffering of Christ, but because that normal connection with God is restored by his sacrifice, which permits the righteous-sing of God to renew its everlasting flow.

When I speak thus of the connection with God as being restored, by the sacrifice of Christ, let me not be understood as meaning, by the sacrifice, only what is tenderly sympathetic and submissive in Christ's death. I include all that is energetic, strong, and piercing; his warnings, his doctrines of punishment and judgment, all that is done for the law before government, by his powerful ministry and doctrine. His sacrifice is no mere suit or plaint of weakness, for the righteousness of God is in it. When the metallic ring of principle, or everlasting right, is heard in the agonies and quakings of the cross, the sacrifice becomes itself a sword of conviction, piercing irresistibly through the subject, and causing him to quiver, as it were, on the point by which he is fastened. Mere sympathy, as we commonly speak,

is no great power; it must be somehow a tremendous sympathy, to have the true divine efficacy. Hence the glorious justifying efficacy of Christ; because the righteousness of God is declared in his sacrifice. We pass now to consider—

II. The relation of faith to justification. Though the righteousness of God is declared and made to shine with its true divine luster and glory by Christ, still the justification is not conceived to be an accomplished fact, as indeed it never can be, prior to faith in the subject. It is justification by faith and not without—"and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." What is this faith, and why is it necessary?

Faith how related to justification.

It is not the belief that Christ has come to even our account with justice; neither is it the belief that he has obtained a surplus merit, which is offered, over and above, as a positive righteousness and set to our credit, if we will have it. Neither of the two is a fact, or at all credible anywise. Neither would both, if believed as mere facts, do any thing more for us than a belief in any other facts. Our sins do not fly away because we believe in a fact of any kind. We can even believe in all the historic facts of Christianity, as thousands do, without being any the more truly justified.

No, the real faith is this, and very little intelligence is required to see the necessity of it; viz., the trusting of one's self over, sinner to Saviour, to be in him, and of him, and new-charactered by him; because it is only

in that way that the power of Christ gets opportunity to work. So the sinner is justified, and the justification is a most vital affair; "the justification of life." The true account of it is that Jesus, coming into the world, with all God's righteousness upon him, declaring it to guilty souls in all the manifold evidences of his life and passion, wins their faith, and by that faith they are connected again with the life of God, and filled and overspread with his righteousness. And there springs up, in this reconnection of the soul with God's righteousness, a perfect liberty and confidence; for it is no more trying to climb up into a righteous consciousness and confidence by itself, but it has the righteousness by derivation; flowing down upon it, into it, and through it, from the everlasting spring of God's excellence. And just here it is that Christianity wins its triumph. It shows man how to be free in good and makes it possible. The best that all other religions and moralities can do, is to institute a practice of works, and a climbing up into perfection by our own righteous deeds; but the gospel of Jesus comes to our relief, in showing us how to find righteousness, and have it as an eternal inspiration; "even the righteousness of God that is by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe."* In it we do not climb, but rest; we goad ourselves into no impossibilities, groan under no bondage that we can not lift; sink into no deep mires because we try to struggle out. We have a possible righteousness, because it is not ours but God's;

Faith defined.

* Rom. iii, 22.

Christ received by our faith, to be upon us and for us, all that we could wish to be for ourselves. This is the transcendent distinction, the practically sublime glory of our gospel, our great all-truth—Justification by Faith. Here is conquered the grandest of all problems, how to put confidence in the bosom of guilt, and settle a platform of virtue, that shall make duty free and joyful under all conscious disabilities.

Here it was that Luther broke into heaven, as it were, and a bewilderment of change that he could not, for the time, understand. He had been trying to be justified by works; that is, by fastings, penances, alms, vigils, wearing down the body under the load of his sins, and crying to God in his cell, day and night, for some deliverance that should ease the torment of his still and always self-condemning soul. A right word from Staupitz let him see the fool that he was—that Christ would take him because he was guilty; having died for him because he was guilty, and not because he was righteous. At that point broke in, what light and confidence! His emancipated soul burst off all its chains in a moment, and took, as it were, the range of heaven in its liberty. He was new himself, the world was new, the gospel was new. It had not entered into his heart to conceive the things that were freely given him of God, but now he has them all at once. Justification by faith, justification by faith—his great soul is full of it; he must preach it, he must fight for it, die for it, know nothing else.

Luther's great discovery of justification.

In the inspiration of this truth it was, that his great

career as a reformer and spiritual hero began. If any thing will make a man a hero, it will be the righteousness of God upon him, and the confidence he gets in the sense of it. If he can be eloquent for any thing, it will be in the testimony of what Christ is to him, in the now glorified consciousness of his inward life. But we must not fall into a very great mistake here. Luther is, in fact, two, not one; viz., a Christian, and a theologian; and his Christian justification by faith, that which puts such a grand impulsion into his feeling, and raises the tone of his manly parts to such a pitch of vigor, is a very different, altogether separate matter, from that theologic contriving of his head, which he took so confidently for the certain equivalent. Taking this latter, it would be difficult to find how any one should become much of a hero, or be lifted to the pitch of any great sentiment, in it. Indeed, the very great wonder is, that a man so intelligent should imagine, for a moment, that he was fired with a passion so mighty, and a joy so transcendent, by the fact that an innocent being had taken his sins and evened the account of justice by suffering their punishment! This he thought he believed; but we are not obliged to believe that he did. Really believing it, and conceiving what it means, the fact would have set his stout frame shuddering, and turned his life to gall. The truth indeed appears to be, that his heart sailed over his theology, and did not come down to see it. We find him contriving, in his "Epistle to the Galatians," how Christ, having all the sins of mankind imputed to him,

Luther's head did not understand his heart.

"becomes the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, thief, rebel, and blasphemer, that ever was, or could be, in all the world;" and his doctrine is, that suffering the just wrath of God, for the sin that is upon him, Christ makes out a right of justification for us before God which is complete, because it completely satisfies the law. And then to be just cleared of punishment, and believe that he is, he conceives to be the very thing that makes his glorious liberty and raises the tempest of his joy! The manner appears to be hideous, the deliverance to be negative and legal only; but his heart is ranging high enough, in its better element—the righteousness of God—even not to be offended by the crudities he is taking for a gospel.

But this is not the first time, that the head of a great man has not been equal even to the understanding, or true interpretation, of his heart. Indeed, nothing is more common, as a matter of fact, than for men of real or even the highest intelligence, to so far misinterpret their own experience in matters of religion, as to ascribe it to and find it springing radically out of, that which has no sound verity, and could never have produced such an experience. Let no one be surprised, then, that Luther's justification by faith, that which puts his soul ringing with such an exultant and really sublime liberty, makes a plunge so bewildering into bathos and general unreason, when it comes to be affirmed theologically in his doctrine. As he had it in his Christian consciousness, the soul of his joy, the rest of his confidence, the enlargement of his gracious liberty,

nothing could be more evidently real and related to the deepest realities of feeling; but as he gave it in his dogmatic record, I confess that calling it justification by faith—*articulus stantis, vel cadentis ecclesiæ*—I could more easily see the church fall than believe it. Happily our very great reverence and admiration for the man may be accommodated in the confidence, that any one may reject it utterly, and yet receive all that his faith received in his justification; and may also be with him in profoundest sympathy, in the *magnificat* he chants, and, with such exhaustless eloquence of boasting, reiterates, in his preaching of the cross and the glorious liberty it brings. Certain it is that no man is a proper Christian, who is not practically, at least, in the power of this great truth. If any thing defines a Christian, it is that he is one who seeks and also finds his righteousness in God.

I am well aware how insufficient this exposition of the great Christian truth, justification by faith, will be to many—to some, because it is a truth that can be sufficiently expounded, by nothing but a living experience of its power; to others, because they have already learned to find their experience in words and forms of doctrine, by which it is poorly, or even falsely represented. What questions the view presented will encounter, especially from this latter class, I very well know, and will therefore bring the subject to a conclusion by answering a few of them.

Do we not then, by holding a view of justification so

essentially subjective, virtually annihilate the distinction between justification and sanctification? This is one of the questions, and I answer it by saying that if the two experiences were more closely related than they are commonly supposed to be, I do not see that we need be greatly disturbed on that account. Still they are sufficiently distinct. According to the Catholic doctrine they are virtually identical; because the "making just," or "making righteous," which is conceived to be the sense of justification, is understood to be a completed subjective change, one that goes below consciousness and makes the soul inherently right—which is the very significance also of sanctification. But if we only conceive the soul to be so joined, by its faith, to the righteousness of God, as to be rather invested by it, or enveloped in it, than to be transformed all through in its own inherent quality; if the righteoussing goes on, even as the sun goes on shining when it makes the day, and stops of necessity when the faith withdrawn permits it to go on no longer; then we have a very wide and palpable distinction. The consciousness of the subject, in justification, is raised in its order, filled with the confidence of right, set free from the bondage of all fears and scruples of legality; but there is a vast realm back of the consciousness, or below it, which remains to be changed or sanctified, and never will be, except as a new habit is generated by time, and the better consciousness descending into the secret roots below, gets a healing into them more and more perfect.

Justification and sanctification not confounded.

In this manner, one who is justified at once, can be sanctified only in time; and one who is completely justified is only incipiently sanctified; and one who has consciously "yielded his members as instruments of righteousness unto God," may discover even more and more distinctly, and, by manifold tokens, a law in his members not yet sanctified away. There is also a certain reference in justification to one's standing in the everlasting law; whereas sanctification refers more especially to the conscious purity of the soul's aims, and the separation of its moral habit from evil. By another distinction, justification is the purgation of the conscience, and sanctification a cleansing of the soul's affections and passions. Both of course are operated by God's inspirations, and are operated only in and through the faith of the subject.

There is indeed no objection to saying that, in a certain general way, they are one—just as faith is one with love, and love with regeneration, and this with genuine repentance, and all good states with all others. The same divine life or quickening of God is supposed in every sort of holy exercise, and the different names we give it represent real and important differences of meaning, accordingly as we consider the new life quickened in relation to our own agency, or to God's, or to means accepted, trusts reposed, or effects wrought. In the same way, justification is sanctification, and both are faith; and yet their difference is by no means annihilated.

Another question likely to be raised in the way of

objection is, whether, in the kind of justification stated, I do not give in to the rather antiquated notion of imputed righteousness? To this I answer, that if the notion supposed to be thus antiquated, is the theologic fiction of a surplus obedience, over and above what was due from Christ as a man—contributed by him in pains and acts of duty from the obedience of his higher nature—which surplus is imputed to us and reckoned to our account, such imputation is plainly enough rejected; still there will be left the grand, experimental, Scripture truth of imputed righteousness, a truth never more to be antiquated, than holiness itself.

How related to imputation.

The theologic fiction more fully stated appears to have been something like this: that Christ, taken simply as a man, was under all the obligations that belong to a man; therefore that he was only righteous as he should be in fulfilling those obligations, and had no righteousness to spare; but that, as being the God-man, he was under no such obligations; whence it resulted that, by his twofold obedience, passive and active, he gained two kinds of surplus righteousness; a passive to stand in the place of our punishment and be a complete satisfaction for it, and an active to be set to our account as being our positive obedience—both received by imputation. And so we are justified and saved by a double imputed righteousness, one to be our suffered penalty, the other to be such an obedience for us as will put us even with the precept of the law. It is even a sad office to recite the scholastic jingle of such a scheme.

made up and received for a gospel. Plainly it is all a fiction. The distinction of a passive and active obedience is a fiction; the passive obedience being just as voluntary as the active, and therefore just as active. The assumption that Christ, to put righteousness upon us, must provide a spare righteousness not wanted for himself, is a fiction that excludes even the possible *koinonia* of the righteousness of God. And a still greater fiction is the totally impossible conception of a surplus righteousness. Christ was just as righteous as he should be, neither more nor less, and the beauty of his sacrifice lay in the fact, not that it overlapped the eternal law, but that it so exactly fulfilled that law. His merit therefore was not that he was better than he should be, but all that he should be; for if he was perfect without the surplus, then he was more than perfect with it, and we are left holding the opinion, that there is a righteousness above and outside of perfection! Still again the imputation of such a perfection to us, so that we shall have the credit of it, is a fiction also of the coldest, most unfructifying kind, and impossible even at that. What has any such pile of merit in Christ, be it suffering, or sacrifice, or punishment, or active righteousness, to do with my personal deserts? If a thousand worlds-full of the surplus had been provided for me, I should be none the less ill-deserving, if I had the total reckoning in possession.

The experimental, never-to-be antiquated, Scripture truth of imputed righteousness, on the other hand, is this:—That the soul, when it is gained to faith, is

brought back, according to the degree of faith, into its original, normal relation to God; to be invested in God's light, feeling, character—in one word, righteousness—and live derivatively from Him. It is not made righteous, in the sense of being set in a state of self-centered righteousness, to be maintained by an ability complete in the person, but it is made righteous in the sense of being always to be made righteous; just as the day is made luminous, not by the light of sunrise staying in it, or held fast by it, but by the ceaseless outflow of the solar effulgence. Considered in this view, the sinning man justified is never thought of as being, or to be, just in himself; but he is to be counted so, be so by imputation, because his faith holds him to a relation to God, where the sun of His righteousness will be forever gilding him with its fresh radiations. Thus Abraham believed God enough to become the friend of God—saying nothing of justice satisfied, nothing of surplus merit, nothing of Christ whatever—and it was imputed to him for righteousness. No soul comes into such a relation of trust, without having God's investment upon it; and whatever there may be in God's righteousness—love, truth, sacrifice—will be rightfully imputed, or counted to be in it, because, being united to Him, it will have them coming over derivatively from Him. Precisely here therefore, in this most sublimely practical of all truths, imputed righteousness, Christianity culminates. Here we have coming upon us, or upon our faith, all that we most want, whether for our confidence, or the complete deliverance and upraising of our guilty and dreadfully

enthralled nature. Here we triumph. There is therefore now no condemnation, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free. If we had a righteousness of the law to work out, we should feel a dreadful captivity upon us. If we were put into the key of righteous living, and then, being so started, were left to keep the key ourselves, by manipulating our own thoughts, affections, actions, in a way of self-superintendence, the practice would be so artificial, so inherently weak, as to pitch us into utter despair in a single day. Nothing meets our want, but to have our life and righteoussing in God, thus to be kept in liberty and victory always by our trust in Him. Calling this imputed righteousness, it is no conceit of theology, no fiction, but the grandest and most life-giving of all the Christian truths.

We also to have our righteousness putatively in God.

We have this imputation also in another form that is equally natural and practical. Thus, instead of having our faith imputed unto us for righteousness, we ourselves teach our faith to locate all our righteousness putatively in God; saying "The Lord our righteousness," "Christ who is our life," "made unto us righteousness;" as if the stock of our virtue, or holiness, were laid up for us in God. All the hope of our character that is to be we place, not in the inherent good we are to work out, or become in ourselves, but in the capital stock that is funded for us in Him. And then the character, the righteousness, is the more dear to us, because it is to have so high a spring; and God is the more dear to us,

that he will have us hang upon him by our faith, for a matter so divine. And the joy also, the confidence, the assurance and rest—all that we include in our justification—is the more sublimely dear, that we have it on a footing of permitted unity with God so transforming and glorious. There is, in short, no truth that is richer and fuller of meaning and power, than this same figure of mental imputation, in which we behold our character laid up and funded for us in the righteousness of God. In one view it is not true; there is no such quantity, or substance, separate from him, and laid up in store for us; but there is a power in him everlastingly able to beget in us, or keep flowing over upon us, every gift our sin most needs; and this we represent to our hearts, by conceiving, in a figure, that we have a stock, just what we call "our righteousness," laid up for us even beforehand, in the sublime quarter-mastering of his love.

It is no fault then of our doctrine of justification by faith, that it favors a notion of imputed righteousness; for in just this fact it is, that the gospel takes us out of the bondage of works into a really new divine liberty. Here, in fact, is the grand triumph of Christianity; viz., in the new style of righteousness inaugurated, which makes the footing even of a sinner good, and helps the striving bondman of duty to be free; even the righteousness of God that is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe. When this is antiquated, just then also will salvation be.

PART IV.

SACRIFICIAL SYMBOLS AND THEIR USES.

CHAPTER I.

SACRIFICE AND BLOOD AND THE LUSTRAL FIGURES.

By the previous exposition, Christ is shown to be a Saviour, not as being a ground of justification, but as being the Moral Power of God upon us, so a power of salvation. His work terminates, not in the release of penalties by due compensation, but in the transformation of character, and the rescue, in that manner, of guilty men from the retributive causations provoked by their sin. He does not prepare the remission of sins in the sense of a mere letting go, but he executes the remission, by taking away the sins, and dispensing the justification of life. This one word Life is the condensed import of all that he is, or undertakes to be.

In the unfolding of this view, I have not overlooked, or at all neglected, the representations of Scripture; every thing advanced has been carefully supported and fortified by ample citations, fairly and reverently, but not always traditionally interpreted. Some, however, may be disappointed, or perhaps offended, by the slight attention I have paid thus far to a large class of phrases and figures derived from the ceremonial law and the uses of the altar, and brought over, by a second application, to express the practical verities of the cross.

But my design has not been to put any slight on these sacrificial terminologies. I have only adjourned them to a future discussion by themselves, because of the unhappy confusion it would create in our trains of thought, if they were brought in to be canvassed, here and there, at points of casual application. We have now reached a point, where the attention may be given them which their very great importance demands.

The sacrificial terms and their interpretation.

I propose therefore, in this and the next following chapter, to ascertain, if possible, their precise Christian meaning, and exhibit their true relation to the doctrine of Christ, as expounded in the preceding pages. I undertake this inquiry, not with a view to getting sanction for the opinions expressed, but in the conviction rather, that a great part of the misconceptions and doctrinal crudities that have been the world's affliction, in this greatest of all matters given to knowledge, have been due to certain hasty, half-investigated impressions, and a kind of traditional charlatanry of dogmatism that have thrown these ritual terms and figures out of their proper and rightful meaning. Reserving to the next following chapter terms and questions more secondary in their import, I shall occupy the present chapter with a discussion of the primary terms *sacrifice*, and *blood*, and the lustral figures *of cleansing and purifying*—with which the secondary terms are blended, and by which, to a certain extent, they must be explicated.

The whole ground to be covered is well represented, in a single passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews—

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."* In this "how much more," referring back to the sacrifices and sprinklings of blood in the ritual of the previous dispensation, we have brought into view the fact of some important, divinely appointed relationship between those sacrifices of the old religion, and the grand final sacrifice of Christ in the new.

The Hebrew sacrifices, how related to that of the gospel.

If we speak thus of a "divinely appointed relationship," we impliedly assume that the sacrifices were divinely appointed. There has been much debate on this question, even among Christian teachers themselves. The great Hebrew scholar, Spencer, maintains the opinion that the Jewish sacrifices were established by Moses, in a way of accommodation to the heathen sacrifices, in which his people had been trained. Archbishop Tillotson goes still beyond him, admitting that even the Christian sacrifice is an act of accommodation to the prejudices and superstitions of the pagan nations. It will not be denied, or should not be, that pagan nations, all pagan nations, have been ready somehow to erect altars and make suit to their gods by sacrifices. This standing confession of guilt and apostasy from God is about as nearly universal as dress, or food, or society. But the remarkable

* Hebrews, ix, 14.

thing, in this general use of sacrifices, is that they take so coarse a form, and one so evidently tinged with superstition.

Human sacrifices, Pagan, never Jewish.

By a most learned and thorough canvassing of proofs, Dr. Magee * has shown the truly appalling fact that human sacrifices have been offered by every people of the known world except the Jews. And a guilty fear, just as conspicuous and just as nearly universal, has prevailed, that the gods are up in their wrath and must have blood to appease them. Now if the Jewish people had borrowed their sacrifices from the pagan peoples, whence comes it that they never show a trace of any such superstition—except in cases where it is reproved and condemned—and never once in their history offer a human sacrifice? For the very point of the command upon Abraham to sacrifice his son is, to show him, in the end, that no such sacrifice is wanted—that obeying God is the deepest reality of sacrifice. Abraham had never read Edwards on the Affections, knew nothing of a piety by definition; and the object is to give him a lesson transactionally, such that, when he is put through the lesson, he shall have the fact established implicitly in his heart—just as Jacob learned to pray transactionally, by his wrestling with the angel. Exactly the same lesson was learned transactionally, or was to be, in all the sacrifices; only in a less impressive, and thoroughly searching, and fearfully trying, manner.

But supposing the Hebrew sacrifices not to have

* Vol. I., p. 74, §§.

been derived, in any sense, from the pagans, as they even visibly were not, still it is a question how they originated, and especially whether they were taken up spontaneously, or were instituted by the direction of God? And here again there is even a more persistent debate that is not yet ended; as indeed it never can be till the question is more skillfully stated. For if they were instituted by God, it could only be by God acting through the sentiments, and wants, and guilty yearnings, of men. They were instituted doubtless just as language was; viz., by a divine instigation acting through human instincts and voices. Man was made for language, and had, in his very nature, a language faculty. But God's work was not ended when that faculty was given, it was only begun; he goes on with it providentially and by secret helps of instigation, causing it to be put forth, and guiding it by his educating and pervasive intelligence, and so the resulting fact of language is completed. In the same manner, human souls were made for religion, and the fact of a fall into sin made the want of it even more urgent. There was now an aching after God, and a dreadful oppression felt in the sense of separation from God. And what could occur more naturally, than some distinct effort to be reconciled to God. In this way, minds were put on the stretch to find some way of expressing penitence, self-mortification, homage, and the tender invocation of mercy. Observing thus how it was the way of smoke to go up heavenward, what hint could they take more

Sacrifices both human and divine in their origin.

naturally, than to make it the vehicle of religion; bringing their choicest, finest animals, such as they took even for their food, and the expression of their hospitality, and sending up their cloud of worshipful homage, by offering them in fire upon their altars? Meantime God is turning them inwardly, by his secret inspirations, to the same thing; wanting as much to help them in being reconciled to him, as they to be reconciled. And so, being in vicarious sacrifice Himself, he prepares them to the very patterns of the heavenly things in Himself, and gets them configured to the everlasting sacrifice, afterwards to be revealed in his Son. For there is a correspondence here, and all these rites, in which for a time the souls of men are to be trained, are so related to Christ and are so prepared to be, that when he is offered, once for all, their idea is fulfilled; whereupon the outward names they generate are to rise into spiritual word-figures, for the sufficient expression of his otherwise transcendent, inexpressible grace.

Sacrifices then are not the mere spontaneous contrivances of men, but the contrivances of men whose contrivings are impelled and guided and fashioned by God —just as truly appointed by God, as if they were ordered by some vocal utterance from heaven. They relate, in fact, to all God's future in the kingdom of his Son, and are as truly necessary, it may be, to that future as the incarnation itself. Nay, they are themselves a kind of incarnation before the time. Assuming thus a clearly divine origin for them, we go on to consider

more distinctly what is not their office, and also what it is. And here the first thing necessary is, to rule out certain false teachings or assumptions which have created inversions of order and thrown the whole subject into confusion.

Not to be interpreted by the sacrifice of Christ.

Thus it is maintained extensively, that we are to get our conceptions of the old sacrifices from the sacrifice of Christ, taking them as shadows cast backward from the sun. But this is very much like assuming, that we are to get our notions of the heart, as a physical organ, from our understanding of the heart as the seat of spiritual life; or to get our notions of a straight line from our understanding of right, or rectitude. We invert the order of nature in this manner, and reverse the whole process of language. The maxim, "first that which is natural, afterwards that is spiritual," we turn quite about, and instead of conceiving that physical things are given to be the bases of words, or word-figures representing spiritual truths, we say that the physical objects were fashioned after the ideas, after the figures, to be coarser substances correspondent with the spiritual realities represented by them. If we know any thing, we know that the whole process of generation in language runs the other way, and that the figures come after the facts, the higher spiritual meanings after, and out of, the physical roots on which they grow.

It is very true that God, in creating the outward forms of things, has a reference of forecast to the uses they will serve as forms of thought and spirit; a refer-

ence, for example, in bodily pain, to the generation of the legal word *penalty*, as a word of religion; a reference in the formalities of the ritual sacrifice to the uses they may fill, as terms and figures, in the representation of Christ, the grand spiritual sacrifice. It is also true that we, looking back on the ancient sacrifices, after apprehending the glorious consummation of their meaning in Christ, may regard them with a higher respect, and with many different impressions; just as we may think of the heart and indeed of the whole human body, in a different manner, after we have seen, with Mr. Wilkinson, the whole spiritual nature represented by it, and coursing, and flowing, and finding fit procession, in it. But these different impressions are only impressions, and no man would undertake, in having them, to draw out the physiology of the human body from them. No more will any sound teacher undertake to show what the ancient sacrifices were, or meant, from the sacrifice of Christ, for which they have provided the necessary nomenclature.

And yet they are meant for Christian uses.

Clearly no such method of interpretation is admissible. We can not construe meanings backward, but we must follow them out in that progressive way, in which they are prepared. If we are to understand the sacrifices, we must take them in their outward forms, and in the meaning they had to the people that used them, just as we take all the physical roots of language; and then, having found what they were in that first stage of use, we must go on to conceive what Christ

will have them signify, in the higher uses of his spiritual sacrifice.

We have another inversion of time and order equally mistaken, when it is maintained that the sacrifices were given to be types, to the worshipers that used them, of Christ and his death as a ground of forgiveness for sins. They are certainly "types," "shadows," when looked back upon by us, of good things that were to come; but it does not follow that they were either types, or shadows, or any thing but simple facts of knowledge and practical observance, to the people who were in them. Nor is there any the least probability that, in using them, they were taking a gospel by forecast. There is no lisp of any such impression in the sentiments they express, either at, or about, their sacrificial worship. The prophets themselves could as little understand "what," as "what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ that was in them did signify," when testifying of the Messiah to come. Not even Christ's own disciples, instructed by his teachings for three whole years, had any conception at all, or even suspicion, of the appointed correspondence between his suffering life and death and the sacrifices of the law, until the descent of the Spirit, after his death, gave them discernment of such a correspondence. Is it then to be conceived, that these sensuous, simple-minded, first men of the world outreached all their prophets, and even the carefully taught hearers of Jesus, and got their salvation at the sacrifice of lambs and bullocks, by embracing a Christ

Not given to the worshipers to be types to them of Christ.

before his coming, whose prefiguration, in such sacrifices, not even these could understand, or imagine, for whole weeks after his sacrifice was accomplished? Such a conceit is over-theoretical and scholastic; it is theologic moonshine, not the true sunlight of sober Christian opinion.

This also was too nearly true of all the immense type-learning that once figured so conspicuously in the Scripture interpretations of this and other subjects. It is very true that the ancient sacrifices were, and were given to be, types of the higher sacrifice of Christ. Not, however, in the sense that they were such to the worshipers in them, but in that common, widely general, always rational sense, that all physical objects and relations, taken up as roots of language, are types and are designed to be, of the spiritual meanings to be figured by them, or built into spiritual words upon them—the physical heart to be the radical image and name of the spiritual disposition, good or bad; the straight line [*rectus*, right] to be the natural word-type of duty and righteousness. A type is, in this view, a natural analogon, or figure, of some mental, or spiritual idea; a thing in form, to represent, and be the name of, what is out of all physical conditions, and therefore has no form. And the outward world itself is a grand natural furniture of typology, out of which the matters of thought, feeling, unseen being, unseen states and worlds of being, are always getting, and to get, their nomenclature.

And yet even necessary as types of Christian language.

In this sense the ancient sacrifices were, no doubt, appointed to be types of the higher sacrifice; visible forms, or analogies that, when the time is come, will serve as figures, or bases of words, to express and bring into familiar use, the sublime facts and world-renewing mysteries of the incarnate life and suffering death of Jesus. There were no types in nature, out of which, as roots, the words could grow, that would signify a matter so entirely supernatural, as the gracious work and the incarnate mystery of Christ. The only way, therefore, to get a language for him at all, was to prepare it artificially; and the ancient ritual of sacrifice appears to have been appointed, partly for this purpose. It had other uses for the men who were in it, but the analogical relation between it and the supernatural grace of Christ, hereafter to be represented in the terms it is preparing, is one that reveals a positive contrivance. We discover in it, both the strictly divine origin of the sacrifices, and that they were appointed, quite as much for the ulterior, higher uses to be made of them, (which no man would even conceive for ages to come,) as for the particular, immediate benefit of the worshipers in them. An apostle speaks of them, it is true, as "the example and shadow of heavenly things,"* and as "a figure for the time then present."† They were indeed such examples and figures, and were used as rites of practical religion for the time then present; but he only means to say that the ancient worshippers received impressions in their use, answering to "the heavenly

* Heb. viii, 5. † Heb. ix, 9.

things" in Christ, without conceiving, either him, or the analogical relations of their worship. They had nothing to say themselves of a future sacrifice, shadowed in their rites; though it was their privilege, apart from all such impossible expectations, to be inducted into a temper and state, in the use of them, that was after a heavenly pattern—even the sacrifice that was in God and that, being shadowed in their forms was afterwards to be revealed in Christ himself.

What meaning had they to the worshipers?

There is, then, we perceive, an inherent appointed relationship between the ancient sacrifices and the sacrifice of Christ, such that we shall come into the true sense of what is meant by his sacrifice, offering, blood, only by an accurate and careful discovery of the meaning, and use, and power, and historic associations of the ancient sacrifices. What then did these sacrifices signify? what were they appointed to do, for the persons who accepted and observed them as the *cultus* of their religion?

They made nothing of the pain of the victims.

When we set ourselves to answer this question, we are met by two very common assumptions, or teachings, that only misdirect our search, and throw us out of the true line of discovery. Thus a great deal is made, by many, of the fact that the animal is slain for the sacrifice—thrust down into death, it is conceived, in the worshiper's place. Quite as much also is made, or even more, of the fact that the animal suffers pain in dying, and thus is an offering of so much pain to God,

in substitution for the deserved pain of the transgressor. Both these constructions upon sacrifices belong, it will be seen, to schemes of expiation, or legal substitution, asserted for the gospel, which in fact require and look for the discovery of similar ideas in the analogies of the ancient ritual.

As to the latter, the pain of dying, it is no light and trivial way of answer, to say that, if the pain of the animal was any such principal thing, then there was no need of any thing farther. To burn the flesh and sprinkle the blood were of no consequence, if the sacrifice was already complete. Offering the flesh in smoke was nothing, if only the pain was offered; for there was no pain in the dead victim. Even supposing the pain to be valuable to the worshiper in a way of expression, the expression is complete, as soon as the victim is dead. What is wanted therefore is the killing of the animal, which requires no special ceremony.

Furthermore it is, to say the least, a very singular thing, if so much of the power and significance of the sacrifices lies in the death and the dying pains of the animals, that no single worshiper of the old dispensation, ever has a word to say of these animal dyings and pains of dying, drops no word of sympathy for the victims, or of sympathetic relenting for sin on their account, testifies no sorrow, witnesses to no sense of compunction, because of the impressions made on him, by the hard fortune they are compelled to suffer. I recollect no single instance in the whole Scripture, where the faintest intimation of this kind appears; and yet, by

the supposition, impressions to be made in this way are even a principal matter in the sacrifices!

Had no tender sympathy for the victims.

Besides, it is also another fault in all such representations of the mode of what is called atonement by sacrifice, that they suppose a tenderness of feeling, as regards the death and suffering of animals, which this people had as little of as every pastoral people must; that is, very nearly none at all. They lived, every day of their lives, on the animals killed in the morning at the tent door. Every woman, every child, looked on at the butchering and grew up in the most familiar habit of seeing life taken; nor was any thing more common than for women, or even for quite young children, to kill and dress a lamb, or a kid, with their own hands. And yet their sacrifice of atonement, it is conceived, is going to have its effect, by the impressions of death and dying pain it wakens in their delicate sensibilities! The fictitiousness of such conceptions is quite too evident.

The choice quality of the animal signified more.

Moreover it is a great point in the observance of these rites that the animal shall be the first born of its dam; a male without spot or blemish. But why, on what principle, if the chief value of the sacrifice depends on the death and dying pains of the animal? Would not any other, a third born, a female, or a lame or blemished animal, die as convulsively and suffer as much?

It is also a very significant objection to these constructions of sacrifice, that, when two goats are brought

to the priest for the people's offering, one is slain and his blood sprinkled on the mercy-seat and about the holy place, to remove the defilement supposed to be upon them, from the sins and uncleannesses of the people; and then the other, by which they are to be personally cleansed themselves, suffers no death, or dying pain at all, as their substitute, but having their sins all put upon his head, by the priest's confession, is turned loose alive and driven off into the wilderness—so to signify the deportation, or clean removal of, their guiltiness. It is therefore called their "atonement" and is, in fact, an offering just as truly as the other that was slain, only it is sacrificed by expulsion, and without even so much as a thought of its death or pain of dying.

The deportation of the sin signified by the scape-goat.

Excluding now these unsupported and really forced constructions of the sacrifices, the question returns, what, in positive reality, were they? wherein lay their use and value? They were appointed, I answer, to be the liturgy of their religion; or, more exactly, of their guilt and repentance before God as a reconciling God—not a verbal liturgy, but a transactional, having its power and value, not in any thing said, taught, reasoned, but in what is done by the worshiper, and before and for him, in the transaction of the rite.

Ordained to be a liturgy.

The people, it must be conceived, have not yet come to the age of reflection. They know nothing about piety, or religious experience, as reflectively defined, preached,

tested, by words. Always going out after their eyes in objective ways of action, and never returning upon themselves, they have no reflective action, no discovery of themselves by self-testing criticism. They are conscious of certain single acts, which they feel to be sins, but not definitely conscious of sin as a state of moral disorder. Of course they are religious beings, guilty beings, but these deep ground-truths of their nature work out in them, from a point back of their distinct consciousness; felt only as disturbances, not discovered mentally in their philosophic nature and reality. Now to manage such a people and train them towards himself, God puts them in a drill of action, works upon them by a transactional liturgy, and expects, by that means, to generate in them an implicit faith, sentiment, piety, which they do not know themselves by definition, and could not state in words that suppose a reflective discovery.

They wanted a religion for the eyes.

This transactional liturgy, taken as a divine institute, is a contrivance of wonderful skill. Considered as in reference to the capacities of the worshipers, and also to results of repentance for sin and newness of life, it displays a wisdom really divine. It begins at a point or base note of action, that, so far as I can recollect, is wholly unknown to the *cultus*, or the sacrifices, of any heathen religion. Moving on results of purity, or purification from sin, it supposes impurity, and lays this down as a fundamental figure, in what may be called the footing of ceremonial uncleanness. Then the problem is to cleanse, or hallow the unclean.

Their fine adaptation as a transactional liturgy.

There is no definition of the uncleanness; for the time of definition has not come. Every thing stands, thus far, on the basis of positive nstitution. Every priest is unclean, till he is cleansed; every place, till it is hallowed. Implicit meaning of the unclean state.

On the great day of atonement, every body is unclean, and the general mass of the people go up thus every year to Jerusalem in caravans, at the greatest inconvenience and with much expense, to be cleansed of their defilement by sacrifice. How far they distinguish in idea this moral kind of uncleanness, from that of their legal appointments, we do not know. Perhaps they do not very soon raise the question of such a distinction. This only they know, that whoever touches a dead body is unclean, and the house in which he dies; that the leper is unclean; that whoever has any suppurative issue is unclean; that whoever touches, or eats an unclean animal, is unclean; that every vessel, dress, oven, defiled by such animals, makes unclean by the use. The specification is too long to be completed, and I only add that every person touching an unclean person is *ipso facto* unclean. Add also that, as the unholy can not approach unto God, so every unclean person is shut away from the temple, from society and house and table, put under quarantine as regards every body else, and every body else under embargo as regards him, producing a state of revulsion and of general torment that is, in the highest degree, uncomfortable.

Upon this now as a basis, is erected the liturgy of sacrifice and blood as a positive institution. It is

ates formally in the result of making clean. The argument of it is—"For I am the Lord your God; ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves and ye shall be holy." It says "do this," "bring this offering," "sprinkle this blood, and you are clean." Perhaps the worshiper will do it only in a ritual, half political way; still he will be so far clean, at any rate. But there is a chance that his soul will go on beyond the mere ritual effect, and allow a deeper sentiment to be called into play. Perhaps he will pass into a new sense of cleanness that breaks over the mere ritual confines, and imports some real beginning of a higher cleansing in his spiritual nature. It certainly will be so, if he brings his offering as a really devout and penitent worshiper.

Meaning also of the clean state made by sacrifice.

So it was with these men of the first, most unreflective ages, exercised in this kind of worship. By and by, as a reflective habit gets to be a little unfolded, a kind of chiding, or rebuke of heartlessness begins to be heard in certain quarters, as if men could think to carry God's favor by bullocks and goats and blood! Still farther on, one or another will be heard crying out in the depth of his guiltiness, and quitting all sacrifice in despair of it, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Then the prophets will begin to rebuke the multitude of sacrifices, as a wretched imposture and offense to God, and to prophesy the complete ending of this old covenant of forms, and the establishment of God's new covenant, by the

Conceptions more and more spiritual thus matured.

Messiah; who shall come to write God's law in the heart itself, and make religion the completely spiritual affair openly, which it always has been implicitly. Then, at last, Christ comes, to substitute all sacrifices, and be himself the sacrifice offered once for all—in what sense and manner we shall see.

How the sacrifices get their power.

Having sketched this outline of the sacrificial history, in its stages of progress and its final culmination, we go back now to the simple first stage of the liturgy, and look into the scheme of it, inquiring how it is to get its power? Not by the death of the victim, we have seen; there is nothing said of the death as having any significance, and there is really not care enough felt for it to give it any. Not by the pain of the victim; nothing is made of that, and nothing is farther off from the worshiper's thought, than to have so much as a serious feeling about it. Not by the satisfaction for sin, or the satisfaction of God's justice; nothing is said either of satisfaction, or of justice, as there could not be when nothing is made either of the pain, or the dying. Not by the substitution made of the victim, given up to suffer in the worshiper's place; for if nothing is made of the suffering of the victim, nothing could be made of a substitution of that suffering. A certain symbolic substitution, or substitution for significance's sake, is made, when sins are confessed on the head of the offering, and just the same is made on the head of the scape-goat, even more formally, when he is driven off alive, to signify

the deportation of sin; where, of course, the symbolic sign is all and the goat nothing—but simply a goat feeding elsewhere.

Excluding now these negatives, the question returns, whence comes the liturgic value and power of the sacrifice on the feeling of the worshiper? First of all there is a certain expense and pains-taking incurred by him, in providing the victim and in making a journey, commonly toilsome, and consuming many days' time to get his offering duly made. Secondly, it is another matter which enters the more deeply into his feeling, that he chooses reverently a fine, fair, first-born animal, that he may give his best to God and that which he most values. Thirdly, when he comes to the altar, before that mysteriously veiled, invisible recess where Jehovah dwells, he puts his hands on the head of the victim, or the priest does it for him, and confesses his sin; going away absolved, as one made clean. Fourthly, it contributes immensely to the power and impressiveness of the transaction, that the blood which figures so largely in it, sprinkled and poured and touched upon this and that place to sanctify the altar and the priest, has been previously invested with an artificial sacredness for this very purpose. No one, even from the earliest beginnings of sacrifice, has been permitted to eat blood, and Moses reënacts the law, under which he makes it even a capital offense, like blasphemy or sacrilege—"For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh

atonement for the soul."* Not that the life thus offered, the life made sacred and mysterious by such associations gathered to it, carries effect by ceasing to live, that is, by death symbolized in the sprinkling of it. No, it gets its effect as being life, the sacred, mystic, new-creating touch of life; for death is uncleanness itself—no one touches a dead body without being made unclean—but the blood is all purifying; "all things are by the law purged with blood."

Here then is the grand terminal of all sacrifice; taken as a liturgy, it is issued in a making clean; it purges, washes, sprinkles, purifies, sanctifies, carries away pollution, in that sense, absolves the guilty. Calling it a making of atonement for this, or that place, or person, it is in the result a making clean—"the priest shall make atonement for her and she shall be clean;"† "make atonement for the house and it shall be clean;"‡ "made an atonement for them to cleanse them."§ The effect is to be lustral simply. The worshiper may never have thought reflectively on his inward defilement, but when so much is done by him for the lustral effect, in a manner so reverent, when he has been touched by the sacred blood in which the mystery of life is hid, followed by the formula that pronounces him clean, it will be strange if his transactional liturgy has not signified more for the state of his inward man, than any prescribed trial and testing in the doctrines of words could have done, at his stage

The effect is to be lustral only.

* Lev. xvii, 11. † Lev. xii, 8. ‡ Lev xiv 53.
§ Numb. viii, 21.

of culture. It is very true that these sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, are declared by an apostle "not to make the comers thereunto perfect." But he only means that they do not finish out, or bring his want of grace to an end; not that they result in no genuine fruits of character. So when he declares that "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins," he does not mean that no one finds a true remission in his offering, but only that he wants another still, and still another, while Christ is offered, once for all, and makes a complete finality of sacrifice.

In what sense a sacrifice?—this now is the principal question whose answer we seek, and are ready to give.

In what sense Christ is a sacrifice.

Here, of course, all the exclusions just made are to be repeated—his pains have no value as pains, or his dying as death; he does not satisfy God's justice; he is not legally substituted in our place. There was nothing of this nature in the sacrifices and, when he becomes a sacrifice for sin, there should not be in his.

A good proximate and general answer to the question, in what sense a sacrifice? is this: that he ful-

Not a literal sacrifice but more.

filled the analogy of the ancient sacrifice; serving like uses, only in a higher key, and in a more perfect manner, with a more complete lustral effect. It has been a question, much discussed, whether Christ is a literal, or figurative sacrifice, and the latter conception has been repelled, with

much feeling, partly because it has been advocated in a way of escaping the fact of any sacrifice at all, and partly because both parties fail to see any very serious meaning left, when the figurative sense is admitted. On one side he is just a figure sacrifice, nothing more. On the other, being reduced to this, he is just a phantom sacrifice, and that is nothing at all. It is not perceived that, when a word rises out of fact in the physical range, to be the fixed name, by figure, of something in the range of thought and spirit, it obtains a meaning as much fuller and more solid as it is closer akin to mind. Is good taste nothing because it is not the literal tasting faculty of the mouth? Is a good heart nothing because it is not the pumping organ of the body, but only a figure derived from it? Is rectitude nothing because it is only a figurative straightness, and not a literal straight line? Is integrity nothing because it is only a moral wholeness and not the veritable integer of arithmetic? How visibly does the figure, as figure, rise to a nobler and more real meaning, in all such examples; and when we find that human language is underlaid all through, in this manner, with physical images, observing their wondrous fitness to serve as a wording for all that mind can think, or wish to express, we are half disposed to believe that they were made and set into nature for this purpose. They become even more real as figures than they are as facts, and there is no so great victory for any truth, or subject of intelligence, as when it has obtained some fit analogon, or "figure of the true," to be its interpreter.

Here, accordingly, it was that God displayed his skill, in adjusting the forms of the altar, and all the solemn externalities of the ritual service. They were not only to be a liturgy for the time then present, but they were to prepare new bases of words not existing in nature, and so a new nomenclature of figures for the sacrifice of his Son. And it took even many centuries to get the figures ready, clothed with fit associations, wrought into fit impressions, worn into use and finally almost into disuse, by the weary, unsatisfied feeling that is half ready and longing for something beyond them—all this it required, to get a language made that was at all competent to express the perfectly transcendental, supernatural, otherwise never imagined or conceived fact of divine suffering and vicarious sacrifice in God. Now the central figure, in this new language for the cross, is sacrifice; a word as much more significant when applied to Christ, than when applied to the altar ceremony, as the Lamb of God signifies more than a lamb. Other words and images come along in the same train, which also belong to the altar and the old transactional liturgy of the temple, and Christ emerges on the world through them all, as by a kind of Epistle to the Hebrews, himself the full discovered love and vicariously burdened sorrow—the cross that was hid in God's nature even from eternal ages. In this view he does not begin to be the real and true sacrifice, till he goes above all the literalities of sacrifice, and becomes the fulfillment of their meaning as figures.

A nomenclature for the gospel.

However this may be, it is sufficiently plain that he

can be a sacrifice, only under conditions of analogy and figurative correspondence, and I am quite certain that he was never conceived, by any one, to be a literal sacrifice, who had not somehow confounded the distinction between a real and a literal sacrifice. He is a sacrifice in much the same sense as he is a Lamb. He is not offered upon any altar, not slain by a priest, not burned with fire. He is not offered under and by the law; but against even the decalogue itself—by false witness and murder. He dies on a gibbet, and the priests have no part in the transaction, save as conspirators and leaders of the mob. There is no absolution, but a challenge of defiance rather—"his blood be on us and on our children."

A sacrifice under conditions of analogy.

In this exposition a certain discoverable analogy is supposed, between what was done, or suffered by Christ, and the offering of victims at the altar. But there is no shadow of resemblance in the external facts of Christ's death, unless it be in some slight finger-marks of correspondence, such as the evangelist notes, when he says, "that the Scripture should be fulfilled—A bone of him shall not be broken." And yet there is such a deep-set, grandly real, and wide-reaching correspondence, that no man, fresh in the sentiments of the altar, could well miss of it, or fail to be strangely impressed by it. Here is the first-born, the unblemished beauty, the chaste Lamb of God—never came to mortal eyes any such perfect one before. And the expense he makes, under his great love-struggle and heavy burden

No external correspondence in the analogy, unless in the sacred blood.

of feeling, his Gethsemane where the burden presses him down into agony, his Calvary, where, in his unprotesting and lamb-like submission, he allows himself to be immolated by the world's wrath—what will any one, seeing all this, so naturally or inevitably call it, as his sacrifice for the sins of the world. His blood too, the blood of the incarnate Son of God, blood of the upper world half as truly as of this—when it touches and stains the defiled earth of the planet, what so sacred blood on the horns of the altar and the lid of the mercy-seat, did any devoutest worshiper at the altar ever see sprinkled for his cleansing! There his sin he hoped could be dissolved away, and it comforted his conscience that, by the offering of something sacred as blood, he could fitly own his defilement, and by such tender argument win the needed cleansing. But the blood of Christ, he that was born of the Holy Ghost, he that was Immanuel—when this sprinkles Calvary, it is to him as if some touch of cleansing were in it for the matter itself of the world! In short, there is so much in this analogy, and it is so affecting, so profoundly real, that no worshiper most devout, before the altar, having once seen Christ—who he is, what he has done by his cross, and the glorious offering he has made of himself in his ministry of good, faithful unto death—who will not turn away instinctively to him, saying, "no more altars, goats, or lambs; these were shadows I see; now has come the substance. This is my sacrifice and here is my peace—the blood that was shed for the remission of sins—this I take and want no other."

And so it comes to pass that Christ is continually set forth in the gospels and epistles of the New Testament, in the terms of sacrifice, because there is so great power in it for the soul; also in the fact, otherwise never conceived or brought down to mortal experience, that God's eternal character has a cross in it, a sorrowing, heavily burdened mercy for his enemies, a winning and transforming power, which it is even their new-creation to feel. I can not go over all the sacrificial terms and expressions of the New Testament, or even the very deliberate exposition of whole chapters in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the correspondence, or analogy, between Christ and the ancient sacrifices, is carefully traced. I will only say, in general, that a very important oversight, in respect to all the altar phrases of the gospel, needs to be corrected. They are cited to prove atonement in the sense of satisfaction, or of an offering made to reconcile God. Hence there is nothing made of the lustral figures, that almost always go along with them; which, if they had any meaning given them, would conduct the mind straight in upon the conclusion, that Christ is offered, not to satisfy God, but to take away sin, to cleanse, purify, make alive and holy, the moral state of sinners.

Christ called a sacrifice because of his lustral power.

Sometimes and not seldom the lustral figures themselves, the very object of which, under the old ritual, was to conduct the worshiper's mind into a fit conception of the result preparing in his sacrifice, are taken just as if they only meant,

Abuses of the Scripture texts.

by the cleansing they speak of in a New Testament use, that God is so far reconciled by due satisfaction, that he may pass transgressors now as being clean, when they are not. They are sprinkled, washed, purged, purified, cleansed, in the sense that for Christ's sake they are admitted to be so, when they are not! And so the proof texts of satisfaction are multiplied with great facility. Let any one gather up all the allusions made in the New Testament to the altar sacrifices, noting carefully those which look towards a lustral and transforming effect on men, as distinguished from those which clearly and positively refer to an effect on God, and he will be astonished to find how the doctrine of judicial satisfaction has engulfed, as by a maelstrom sweep, every most unwilling thing that has come in its way. Probably nine-tenths at least of the proof texts of the New Testament, under figures taken from the altar, make the sacrifice of Christ a plainly lustral offering in its effect, while the other tenth as plainly stop short of any reconciling effect on God. And yet they have so long been read in a different way, that we are scarcely aware of the forced meaning put upon them. Such a fact can not be verified, without going into a general canvass of the texts, which is here impossible. I can only call attention to the fact, adding as examples just a few of the principal texts, which it will be seen, without a word of comment, bear the lustral meaning, or the expectation of a cleansing, sin-removing, life-giving, effect, on their faces.

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.*

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through him.†

The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.‡

Who his own self bare our sins, in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye are healed.§

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.‖

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, * * * Let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.¶

And having made peace, through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight.**

* John i, 29. † 1 John iv, 9–10. ‡ 1 John i, 7.
§ 1 Peter ii, 24. ‖ Heb. ix, 14. ¶ Heb. x, 19–21.
** Col. i, 20–2.

Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*

The charlatanism of interpretation—it is really one of the saddest chapters of our Christian history! And what a revelation of it have these poor texts to give, when released from their long captivity, and allowed to simply speak for themselves!—testifying, all, with glad consent, that Christ is our sacrifice, for the taking away of our sin, our quickening unto life, our cleansing and spiritual reconciliation with God.

There is still another class of figures generated casually, outside of the ritual; partly judicial, partly political and historical, partly commercial, and partly natural. The footing already gained by what we have shown respecting the divinely contrived symbols of the altar, makes it unnecessary to devote a distinct chapter to their consideration. It will be sufficient to give them a brief supplementary notice here.

The first class, the judicial, or seemingly judicial, appears abundantly in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah—

The judicial figures.

"stricken, smitten of God and afflicted;" "wounded for our transgressions;" "bruised for our iniquities;" "the chastisement of our peace was upon him;" "by his stripes we are healed;" "for the transgression of my people was he stricken;" "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." These are all figures that refer, more or less clearly, to judicial and penal processes; as if Christ, the subject, were somehow

* Rev. i, 5.

punitively handled in our place. But the whole chapter, it will be observed, is from the point of gratitude, or holy ascription, after the offering is made. It is the witness of a tender confession, not a prophesy, save in that form. And what is more natural than for a soul delivered of its curse, its retributive woes, its penal bondage, and heaving in great sentiments of praise and holy ascription to its deliverer, to represent him, in his suffering goodness, as having taken upon himself the very pains and dues of justice he has removed? "Did he not bear my punishment? did he not bleed under my stripes? was not my chastisement upon him? was he not smitten of God in judgments that were falling on me?" And yet every one who makes this confession will know that he means this only as in figure, to express his tender acknowledgment, and nothing will be farther off from his thought than to imagine that he was literally asserting the punishment of his deliverer.*

Besides we have, here and there, a mark put in, which indicates moral effect, and turns the meaning quite away from the understanding of a literal punishment; as for example in the "peace" that follows chastisement, and the healing that follows the stripes—"with his stripes we are healed." Furthermore, it would be a plain abuse of Scripture to set one class of figures, in regard to a given subject, clashing with another; and still more to set the mere chance symbols of a subject directly against the deliberately contrived symbols prepared for it. If, then, we find the altar symbols looking system-

* Illustrated more fully pp. 396–7, Part III., Chap. VI.

atically, all as one, towards results of moral effect, these casual symbols and all others of the same general nature ought surely not to be taken as looking towards an effect purely judicial and penal.

And there is still less reason for this, in the fact that Christ, doing all for moral effect, did actually bear, as we have fully shown, the corporate curse and penal disorder of the world, in a way of renewing it; a fact in which all such judicial figures are sufficiently met, though the curse was in no sense penal as against him.

Political and historic figures.

The political and historical figures are such as grew out of the release of captives taken in war. Thus we have "redemption," as a figure derived from the buying back of captives; and "ransom," as the sum advanced for that object. Thus Christ, in offering himself for our deliverance, became our redemption, gave himself a ransom for us, or more briefly gave himself for us. Where, of course, the main idea signified, is our moral and spiritual emancipation from the bondage of evil; a result in the nature of moral effect, wholly coincident with the lustral figures of the ritual.

The commercial figures.

The commercial figures are to the same effect—"bought with a price;" "purchased with his blood;" "forgive us our debts." Whole theories of atonement have been based on each of these analogies, and all the other symbols of the New Testament have been compelled, how often, to submit themselves to the regulative force of these analogies, taken virtually as the literalities of the question.

A much truer and freer meaning would be assigned with as much greater dignity, and requires not even to be stated.

The natural figures are such as death and life, "reconciled by the death;" "saved by his life;" "tasted death for every man;" "Christ who is our life." In all these figures, which are multiplied in a hundred shapes, and set in a hundred diverse combinations, moral effect is the always present and, in fact, only constant matter intended.

The naturally significant figures.

I will not pursue this exposition farther; for the reason that there is plainly no necessity for it. The general conclusion is, that all the Scripture symbols coincide, as nearly as may be, in the one ruling conception, that Christ is here in the world to be a power on character—to cleanse, to wash, to purify, to regenerate, new-create, make free, invest in the righteousness of God, the guilty souls of mankind. Beyond that nothing plainly is wanted, and therefore there is nothing to be found.

CHAPTER II.

ATONEMENT, PROPITIATION, AND EXPIATION.

In the previous chapter, a careful investigation was made of the use or purpose of the ancient sacrifices and rites of blood, and the endeavor was, to find by what means, or in what sense, Christ is called a sacrifice, and is represented as accomplishing so much by his blood. In this investigation I passed over certain much disputed points in the institution and the Christian doctrine of sacrifice, that, in settling first the more positive questions of practical use and meaning, we might not be distracted, or confused, by multiplicities too numerous to allow the distinct settlement of any thing. We come now to the much debated and difficult questions that range under the words *atonement*, *expiation*, *propitiation*. These are words pertaining secondarily to sacrifice, or to the effects of sacrifice, and are commonly set in such prominence, as to be words of principal figure, not only in the doctrine, but also in the preaching of the cross. Our investigation therefore of sacrifices and the Christian sacrifice will not be complete, or satisfactory, till these ruling words and ideas are ventilated by a careful discussion.

As regards the words themselves, it may be well to note, in the first place, that the English word *atonement* is entirely an Old Testament word, not occurring at all in the translation of the New, except in a single instance ;* where it is given as the translation of a word that is twice translated *reconciliation*, in the previous verse, and in every other place in the New Testament is translated reconciliation. And yet the deviation in this particular instance is less remarkable, because the English word atonement, at the time when the Scriptures were translated, meant to reconcile, that is, to *at-one*. And it is in this sense of making reconcilement, putting-at-one, that the word is so often used in the Old Testament. There, however, it is not so much the literal translation or transfer of the Hebrew word in its own type, as a new, though very good and proper construction, put in its place. The Hebrew word is *cover*, the very same root from which our English word *cover* is derived. Thus where we read so often, "he shall make atonement for you," "scape-goat to make atonement," and the like, it means the same thing as to make *sin-cover*, that is, reconciliation; the conception being, that sin is thereby covered up, hidden from sight or memory. Exactly the same thing is meant, when, using a different figure, it is said to be purged, cleansed, taken away. When the transgressor is said to be atoned or reconciled, the being *covered* is taken subjectively in the same way; as if something had come upon him to

Two ruling conceptions. Atonement and Propitiation.

* Romans v, 11.

change his unclean state, and make him ceremonially, or, it may be, spiritually, pure.

But the subject thus atoned is not only covered or cleansed in himself, but he is figured as being put in a new relation with God, and God with him; and it is as if God were somehow changed towards him—newly inclined, mitigated, propitiated or made propitious. It resulted accordingly, that the Hebrew word *to cover* was very frequently translated in the Greek Septuagint, by a word that signifies *to propitiate* or *make propitiation.* And the same word occurs, in six instances in the New Testament, and under three grammatic forms; where it is translated, three times, "propitiation;" once, "to make reconciliation;" once, "be merciful;" and once, "mercy-seat;" the three latter examples having, of course, their fair equivalents, in the phrases, "make propitiation," "be propitious," and "seat of propitiation."

We have then, two ruling conceptions of sacrifice, connected with, or resulting from, the figure of a sin cover; one representing the effect in us, and the other an effect in God as related to us—reconciliation [at-one-ment,] and propitiation. I shall recur to them again, at the close of the chapter, to settle more exactly their relative import, when applied to the Christian sacrifice. Meantime, another very weighty matter demands our careful attention; viz., the question of expiation.

Both conceptions miscolored by expiation.

Both these terms, atonement and propitiation, are turned from their true meaning, in our common uses, by the false idea of expiation associated with them, or

entered theologically into them. To atone is no more to reconcile, that is to restore and make clean, but it is made to mean the answering for sin, making amends for it, by offering expiatory pains to obtain the discharge of it. Propitiation is made in the same way, to signify the placation of God, by a contribution of pains and expiatory sufferings. We can not therefore recover the two words, atonement and propitiation, to their true meaning, without going into a deliberate and careful investigation of the false element by which they are corrupted.

Expiation not a word of the Scriptures but of the classics.

The word expiation does not once occur in the Scripture. The idea is classical, not scriptural at all, but the word has been sliding into use by the christian disciples and teachers, and getting itself accepted interchangeably for such as belong to the Scripture, till it has come to be even a considerable test of orthodoxy. I do not object to it, however, because of its origin, but because of its incurable falsity. A new word applied to christian subjects is not, of course, to be condemned, because it is new. Neither is a pagan word to be always cast out. But a word both new and pagan, made staple as in application to an old, divinely ordered, staple institution of Scripture, like that of sacrifice, must be admitted, I think, to wear a suspicious look. It should certainly have been carefully questioned, before it was baptized into the faith, as I very much fear it was not.

But the baptism is passed and we have the word upon us. The only matter left us for inquiry therefore, relates to ideas themselves, and I propose, that I may cover the whole ground of the subject, three questions,—

I. What is expiation?

II. Is it credible as a fact under the divine government?

III. Is there any such thing as expiation supposed in the Scripture sacrifices?

Expiation is an evil given to buy the release of an evil.

I. What is expiation? It does not, I answer, simply signify the fact that God is propitiated, but it brings in the pagan, or Latin idea (for it is a Latin word,) that the sacrifice offered softens God, or assuages the anger of God, as being an evil, or pain, contributed to his offended feeling. That Christ has fulfilled a mission of sacrifice, and become a reconciling power on human character, has been abundantly shown. And this change thus wrought in men, we shall also see, is the condition of a different relationship on the part of God. But an expiatory sacrifice proposes a settlement with God on a different footing; viz., that God is to be propitiated, or gained over to a new relationship, by very different means. The distinctive idea of expiation is that God is to have an evil given him by consent, for an evil due by retribution. It throws in before God or the gods some deprecatory evil, in the expectation that the wrath may be softened or averted by it. The power of the expiation depends not on the

sentiments, or repentances, or pious intentions connected with it, but entirely on the voluntary damage incurred in it. According to the Latin idea, "*Diis violatis expiatio debetur*"—when the gods are wronged, expiation is their due—and the understanding is that, when the wrong-doers fall to punishing themselves in great losses, it mitigates the wrath of the gods and turns them to the side of favor.

A pagan corruption of the Jewish *cultus*.

Now it is in this particular idea of expiation, the giving an evil to the gods, to obtain a release for other evils apprehended or actually felt, that the sacrifices of all the heathen nations were radically distinguished from the Jewish or Scripture sacrifices. And the pagan religions were corruptions plainly enough, in this view, of the original, ante-Mosaic, ante-Jewish *cultus*—superstitions of degenerate brood, such as guilt, and fear, and the spurious motherhood of ignorance, have it for their law to propagate. As repentance settles into penance under this regimen of superstition, so the sacrifices settled into expiations under the same. And the process only went a little farther, when they fell, as they did the pagan world over, into the practice of human sacrifices; for since the gods were to be gained by expiatory evils, the greater the evil the more sure the favor; and therefore they sometimes offered their captives, sometimes their sons and daughters, sometimes their kings' sons, and sometimes even their kings and queens themselves; believing that in no other manner could they sufficiently placate their envious and bloody deities.

Expiation figured in this manner, not as a merely casual and occasional part of religion, but as being very nearly the same thing as religion itself. For as even Tacitus could say, that "the gods interfere in human concerns, but to punish," what could they think of doing, in religion, but to expiate? The classic and all pagan sentiments of worship, being thus corrupted by the false element or infusion of expiation, the later Jewish commentators and Christian theologians finally took up the conception, laying claim to it as a worthy and genuine property in all sacrifices, whether those of the law, or even the great sacrifice of the gospel itself. And now there is nothing more devoutly asserted, or more reverently believed, than our essential need of an expiatory sacrifice, and the fact that such a sacrifice is made for our salvation, in the cross of Jesus Christ.

Expiation not so defined, yet so understood.

It is a matter of justice I gladly admit, and, for the honor of the gospel, I should even like to make the concession broader still, that the advocates of Christian expiation do not define it in the terms I have given. They do not seem to have drawn their thoughts to any point close enough to yield a definition, but only understand, in general, that when they speak of expiation, they mean a bloody sacrifice. And yet they do mean, if we take their whole mental content, something more; viz., just what I have described. How we commonly use the term in other matters than religion, may be seen, for example, when we say of a murderer who has been executed, that he has expiated his crime; or of any

one who has done a dishonorable deed, that the shame in which he lives, is the bitter expiation of his fault. We always show, in such modes of speaking, that the matter of the expiation is conceived to be an evil, a pain, a loss. And our religious impressions are cast in the same mold. We never speak of good deeds, or sentiments, or sacrifices of love, as expiations. Nothing is expiatory that does not turn upon the fact of damage, or pain, or self-punishment. Neither is there any difficulty in discovering, from the manner in which theologians speak of expiation, that they think of God as having some evil, or pain, or naked suffering offered him for sin, and that, on account of such offering, he may release the evil, or pain, or suffering his unsatisfied wrath would otherwise exact. Thus, taking the mildest form of superstition, it will be maintained that God's wrath is to be averted by sacrifice; that is by something given to wrath, that is wrath's proper food; which can of course be nothing but some kind of pain, or evil. Sometimes the expiation will be conceived under moral conditions, as a transaction before God's justice; the assumption being that, as God is just, he must, of course, lay upon wrong-doing exactly the evil or pain it deserves, and can only release it by having other pain given him in direct substitution. Sometimes it will be conceived that God is maintaining a good law for the world, which he can do only by annexing evils, in a way of penalty, that fully express his abhorrence of sin, and that such evils can be released only by giving him others, in which he may express the same ab-

horrence. But in all these varieties we have plainly enough the common element of expiation; viz., an evil given for sin, which is to avail as being an evil. It is not conceived, as in the Scripture sacrifice, that the sinning man is to come bringing the choicest, most beautiful lamb of his flock, that, in offering it, he may express, and in expressing feel, something which God wants him to feel, and for his own benefit show; but the pagan idea prevails; the sacrifice it is claimed, must be an expiation—some evil brought, that is to work on God by deprecation, or self-punishment, or painful loss. Nor does the moral absurdity of putting any such heathenish construction on the Scripture sacrifices deter at all from doing it. Still, as there is sin, there must be expiation, and that is made, not by offering up a child, or a magistrate, but by the property loss of a sheep—felt as a great evil, or pain, by the soul! A kind of expiation more fit to kindle God's wrath than to soften it; for the more it is felt as an evil the meaner and more heartless the sacrifice.

Having distinguished in this manner, what an expiation is, we proceed to inquire—

II. Whether expiations for sins, taken as defined, are admissible under the divine government?

And here I do not undertake to say that nothing can be asserted under the word, which is worthy of respect and acceptance. Thus if a sinner of mankind, oppressed with a sense of inward ill-desert and shame, should seek out voluntarily some mode of expense, or pains taking,

in which, considered as a punishment of himself, he might prove and express, and, by expression, exercise a clean repentance before God, and, doing this, should call it making expiation for his sin, God might properly enough accept his unenlightened sacrifice; not however because of the evil brought him in it, but because the guilty sufferer came thus, trying honestly to trample his sins and put God in the right concerning them. Such uses of the word are admissible, but in the sense of expiation above defined, the sense which belongs to it whenever we speak of expiatory sacrifice, where giving God an evil not deserved, we expect Him to be placated in regard to an evil deserved,—in such a sense expiation has no character that makes it approvable by intelligence, or endurable by a true sentiment of God's worth and justice.

Possible good sense of expiation.

If it is a mere feeling in God which is to be placated by an expiatory sacrifice, then we have to ask, is God such a being that, having a good mortgage title to pain or suffering as against an offender, he will never let go the title till he gets the pain—if not from him, then from some other? Such a conception of God is simply shocking.*

* Not even Dr. Magee, when asserting expiation, will allow that God is made placable by it, insisting that He simply appoints it "as the means by which to bestow forgiveness." And when it is urged that the expiation can have no use "but to appease a Being who otherwise would not forgive us," he takes shelter under his ignorance, from a conclusion so revolting, and answers—"I know not, nor does it concern me to know, *in what manner* the sacrifice of Christ is connected with the

But the title to pain, as against offenders, it will be said is simply what is demanded of them by justice, and what he, as the eternal guardian of justice, is as truly bound to inflict, as they to suffer. God therefore has no option, he can not release the foredoomed evils, or pains, save as they are substituted by compensative evils. But suppose it to be so, and that God, as ruler of the world, is bound to do by every man just as he deserves. What means this inflexible adherence to the point of desert, when, by the supposition, he is going to accept, in expiation, an evil not deserved? He is going, in fact, to overturn all relations of desert, by taking pains not deserved, to release pains that are. Is this justice? or is it the most complete and solemn abnegation possible of justice? To get a pain out of somebody, is not justice; nothing answers to that name, but the inexorable, undivertible, straight-aimed process of execution against the person of the wrong-doer himself.

Not demanded by justice or consistent with it.

So of punishment, regarded as the penalty ordained for the enforcement of law, necessary to be enforced for the honor and due authority of law. Doubtless if something better can be done, in given circumstances, than to literally execute the penalty, something that will keep the law on foot, clothe it with still higher authority, and make the dread of its penalty felt as being

forgiveness of sins."—(Vol. 1, p. 19.) When however the crisis of the argument, at this point, is gone by, he recovers from his ignorance and is able to assert very positively that the justice of God is satisfied by the sacrifice of expiation.

even more imminent than before, a qualification of vindicatory justice so prepared will do no harm. But to remit a punishment or pain deserved, in consideration of a similar punishment or pain not deserved, accepted by an innocent party, so far from being any due support of law, is the worst possible mockery of it. It belongs to the very idea of punishment, that it fall on the transgressor himself, not on any other, even though he be willing to receive it. The law reads "do this or thou shalt die," not "do this or somebody shall die." A fine, or a debt, may be paid by any body; but a punishment sticks immovably to the wrong-doer, and no commutation, expiation, or transfer of places can remove it.

In the story of Zaleucus often referred to as an illustration, nothing is shown but a very sorry fraud practiced on the law. The father finding his son guilty of a crime, whose prescribed penalty in the law is that the malefactor shall have his eyes put out, contrives to get off his son with the loss of one eye, by consenting, in a most fond paternity, to lose one of his own eyes, in substitution for the other. But the law did not require, for its penalty, the loss of two eyes; it required the putting out of *the* two eyes of the transgressor; that is that he be reduced to blindness for the rest of his life. After all, this old historic myth, so often celebrated as an example of rigid and impartial justice, is only an example of bad law, or of a very tenderly parental sophistry enacted for the evasion of law. Story of Zaleucus.

Much better and more solidly true to law is Crom-

well's answer in the case of George Fox. The facts are given by Fox himself in his Journal.* He was lying in prison, at the time, in a basement pit, inexpressibly filthy, called Doomsdale. And he says: "While I was in prison in Lancaster, a friend went to Oliver Cromwell and offered himself, body for body, to lie in Doomsdale in my stead, if he would take him and let me have liberty. Which thing so struck him that he said to his great men and council, 'which of you would do as much for me, if I were in the same condition?' And though he did not accept of the friend's offer, but said he could not do it, *for that it was contrary to law*, yet the truth thereby came mightily over him."

Cromwell and George Fox.

It might also be urged that, if expiation were a more feasible and better element than it is, not derogatory to the character of God, not incompatible with first principles of justice, not a way of compensating law that takes away its most essential, highest moral attribute as law; viz., the unalterable personality of its distributions—if, in all these respects, it were a morally admissible and even wholesome conception, still there is a difficulty in it, as far as the sacrifice of Christ is concerned, which is insurmountable. If the gist of that sacrifice consists in the fact, that Christ in atoning, or expiating sin by his death, offers the simple endurance of so much evil or pain, we can not but ask who is Christ, in all that gives significance to his life, but the incarnate Word of God's

Trinity rightly held, excludes expiation.

* Fox's Journal, Glasgow edition, p. 262.

eternity? Take whatsoever view of Christ's person we may, no one can imagine that his sacrifice was simply a man's sacrifice, a transaction of his merely human nature. Besides the pain he suffered, that of his agony, that of his cross, was in all but the smallest, scarcely appreciable part, a moral pain, the pain of his moral sensibility,—his love, his purity, his compassionate feeling, that which it was a great part of his errand to reveal, that which not to have suffered, under such conditions, would have been a virtual disproof of his greatness and divinity. So far, at least, his pains are pains of his divine nature. Does then God's right hand offer pains to his left, and so make expiation for the sins of the world? How many Gods have we? Not any more truly three, or less simply one, because we hold the faith of a trinity. Expiation appears to suppose that we have at least two, one placating the other, and he again accepting the expiation of sins in the sufferings of the first. Faithfully holding that our God is one, expiation loses opportunity. There is no place for it; no such transaction can be had for the want of parties, and the matter is incredible as being simply impossible.

Holding now these very sufficient objections to the matter of expiation, or expiatory sacrifice, we should not expect to find it recognized in the Scriptures. Passing then to the question that remains, we inquire:

III. Is there any such thing as expiation contained, or supposed to be wrought in the Scripture sacrifices?

The common assumption is that the sin offerings of

the Old Testament and the offering of Christ in the New are all expiatory, and in that fact have their value, contrary to all such impressions.

No trace of expiation in the Scriptures.

I am able, after a most thorough and complete examination of the Scriptures to affirm with confidence, that they exhibit no trace of expiation. I had supposed that the impression so generally prevalent must be well grounded, but my suspicions were awakened by observing one or two points where the impression failed, and was tempted thus to push the inquiry to its limit. That such an opinion has been so long and generally held of the Scripture sacrifices, I can only account for, in the manner already suggested; viz., that there is a natural tendency in all worthy ideas of religion to lapse into such as are unworthy—repentance, for example, into doing penance—that the sacrifices could easily be corrupted in this manner, and, in fact, were by all the pagan religions; and then that there was imported back into the constructions of holy Scripture, a notion of expiation, as pertaining to sacrifice, under the plausible but unsuspected sanction of classic uses and associations. Nothing could be more natural and it appears to be actually true. Indeed it is a common thing, even now, to illustrate the manner and supposed necessity of expiation for sin, by citations from Hesiod, Homer and other classic writers.

It is impossible, of course, in a discussion of this nature, to go over a complete review of the whole series of Scripture instances and uses, but the argument will

be tolerably well conceived under heads of classification such as follow.

1. That nothing was made of the victim's death, or pain of dying, in the ancient sacrifices, was sufficiently shown in the last previous chapter.

Nothing made of the victim's pains.

2. Expiations are always conspicuous in their meaning. No man could even raise a doubt of the expiatory object of the pagan sacrifices; no such doubt was ever entertained. In this view, if the scripture sacrifices do not show an expiatory meaning on their face and declare themselves unmistakably in that character, if it is a matter of rational doubt or debate, such doubt is a clear presumptive evidence that their object is somehow different.

Expiations ought to be palpable, and are not.

3. The original of the word atone, or *make atonement*, in the Hebrew scripture, carries no such idea of expiation. It simply speaks of *covering*, or *making cover* for sin, and is sufficiently answered by any thing which removes it, hides it from the sight, brings into a state of reconciliation, where the impeachment of it is gone. Accordingly it is sometimes translated to *reconcile* or *make reconciliation*;* sometimes to *pardon*;† sometimes to *purify*, *cleanse*, *purge*.‡ It is also true that this word is sometimes translated, in the Septuagint, by the same Greek word,

The atonements not expiations.

* Lev. viii, 15; 2 Chron. xxix, 24; Ezek. xlv, 20; Dan. ix, 24.

† 2 Chron. xxx, 18; Jer. xviii, 23.

‡ Ex. xxix, 36,—xxx, 10; Numb. xxxv, 33; 1 Sam. iii, 14; **Ezek.** xliii, 20-26 Isa. vi, 7.

or a word of the same root, as that which is translated *propitiation* in the New Testament; and it is also true that this Greek word is often translated into Latin and English, by the word *expiation*. But to draw an argument from this, for the fact of expiation in the Hebrew sacrifices, is to go upon a long circuit of travel, and get nothing that amounts to evidence at the end. For the classic tongues would certainly be apt to associate expiation with sacrifice, and the Septuagint would not be likely to avoid that mistake. Every thing turns here, manifestly, on the meaning of the original Hebrew word; and as the root or symbol of this word means simply *to cover*, we can see for ourselves that, while it might be applied as a figure, to denote a covering by expiation, it can certainly as well and as naturally be applied to any thing which hides or takes away transgression.

4. Atonements are accordingly said to be made, where the very idea of expiation is excluded; and sometimes where there is, in fact, no sacrifice at all. Thus atonements were made for the sanctifying of the altar; that is, for sanctifying it in men's feeling; for as it was necessary to the liturgic power of the sacrifice on the sentiment of the worshipers, that the blood of their offering should be made to be a sacred thing, so it was necessary that the altar itself should be invested with a real and felt sanctity. Thus we read,* "Seven days shalt thou make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it,

Atonements that exclude expiation.

* Exodus xxix, 37.

and it shall be an altar most holy." To give an example where expiation is excluded because there is no sacrifice, Moses, when the people had sinned so grievously, in the matter of the golden calf, said,* "Now I will go up unto the Lord, peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin." He went up accordingly and made intercession for them, in words of supplication, without any sacrifice at all and this was his atonement. Plainly enough there is no expiation in these cases. In the first there is none, because there is no sin upon the altar to be expiated, and in the second because there is no sacrifice. The atoning spoken of is a purifying, or a making reconciliation, without a possibility of expiation.

5. It is a great point that expiations, or expiatory sacrifices, are certainly not offered where we should expect them to be, if they are offered at all. Thus in the case just referred to of the sin of the golden calf, where the sottish convictions of the people have been roused, and their fears raised into a panic by the terrible judgment of God upon them, Moses himself speaks of the "atonement" they need for their sin; but instead of a great and solemn sacrifice of expiation, where, if ever, it was to be expected, he undertakes their case for them himself, in his own personal intercession before God. So again, in the great mutiny of the people that followed the judgment of Korah, where a deadly plague is falling upon them for their sin, Moses orders

Expiations not offered where we should expect them.

* Exodus xxxii, 30.

no sacrifice of expiation, but he says to Aaron* "Take a censer and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly into the congregation, and make atonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the Lord." The plague is stayed; not by expiation certainly; for it is never supposed that there is any such thing as expiation by incense. And yet this was a case for expiation, if any such ever existed. We have another case like it, in the great reformation of Josiah,† where the sacred book is found in the temple, and the king and people, on a public reading of the book, are put in such dread of the wrath of God about to overtake them, in the curses of the book denounced upon their sin, that a grand convocation of Israel is called to avert the impending judgments. Now again is the time for a great sacrifice of expiation; and yet there is no sacrifice made, or prepared; but the king, seeing no better and surer way of deliverance, takes his position before the assembled multitudes, and requires them all to join him in a solemn covenant to forsake their evil ways, and walk in all the statutes of the book. So again, when Ezra is overtaken with great concern for the nation, on account of the general intermarriage of priests and people with idolatrous women, he betakes himself to fasting, confessing, weeping, and casting himself down before the house of God; the people also weep sore with him; but no sacrifice of expiation is offered, and no other way of averting God's anger is thought of, than a general and total forsaking of the

* Numbers xvi, 46. † 2 Chronicles, xxxiv.

sin; which every transgressor is required to do without equivocation or delay.* Now in all such cases, and they are many, we look for expiation and do not find it, and what is quite as remarkable, there is no case to be found where God's anger, in a day of guilt and fear, is placated, or even attempted to be, by a clearly expiatory sacrifice. It was not so among the pagan nations, and it could not be so here, if expiation were any recognized part of the national religion.

6. The requirement of the heart, as a condition necessary to acceptance in the sacrifices, is a very strong presumptive evidence that no idea of expiation belonged to sacrifice. At first, nothing appears to be said of the spirit in which the offering is to be made, though it is not to be supposed that it was ever accepted, in any but a merely ritual and ceremonial sense, unless coupled unconsciously, or implicitly, with a true feeling of repentance. As already observed, there was at first, almost no capacity of receiving truths and being exercised in states, by reflection. Spiritual impressions and results of character were to be operated for a time transactionally only, under liturgical forms of sacrifice. And a beginning made in this way, connected with a continued drill under miraculous Providences, was to operate a course of development, and prepare a more reflective capacity. By and by this will so far be accomplished, that the prophets and other teachers of the people will begin to put them in a consideration of their senti-

The requirement of the heart, against expiation.

* Ezra x, 1–15.

ments, and the amendment of their lives, in their sacrifices. This will bring on frequent rebukes of hypocrisy in them, and contrasts between mere heartless offerings and a genuine holiness of life, that relatively sink the importance of sacrifice, and sometimes appear to almost sink it out of sight, as a thing of little account. Indeed we are made to feel, before the prophetic era is closed up, that sacrifice is getting to be well nigh outgrown, or superseded, by a more reflective way of exercise, that is moderated and guided by truth.

Now that any such religious progress could have been accomplished under a training of expiatory sacrifice appears to be quite impossible. The giving of evils to God to obtain the release of evils, is a practice so nearly akin to superstition, so barren of all right sentiment, so little likely to stimulate habits of personal conviction, that we rather look for a lapse into fetichism under it. Such a kind of sacrifice requires nothing obviously but the placation of God by a contribution of the necessary evils, and they may as well be contributed in one feeling as another. Enough that they are forthcoming, no matter in what feeling, if only the due penance be made. Under a plan of sacrifice contrived to work on the sentiments of the worshipers, and quicken germs of holy feeling in them, a different result might be effected,—never under sacrifices of ex piation.

To bear out these strictures, and show that they are verified by facts, I will refer to only a few of the many scripture citations that might be offered. Thus, taking

one example from the historic books, we find that Saul, an overgrown child of superstition, offers a sacrifice on two several occasions in his own way, disregarding God's appointed way and even his special command,—in the first instance, because, in going to battle, he wants to "make supplication to the Lord;"* and in the second, because, having gained a victory, he wants to honor God in a grand ovation of sacrifice—whereupon Samuel meets him in sharp rebuke, saying,† "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold (this appears to be an already accepted proverb,) to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

The same sentiment is reiterated many times by David,‡ testifying his readiness to yield God what is better than all sacrifice, an obedient heart. In the Psalm first mentioned, he uses, out of his own personal feeling, just the language that is afterwards applied to Christ,§ "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened; burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God, yea, thy law is within my heart." As if it were every thing, even at the stage of development then reached, to have God's law in the heart; sacrifices practically nothing—"The sacrifices of God a broken spirit." Isaiah holds the same sentiment in a strain of

* 1 Samuel xiii, 12.

† 1 Samuel xv, 10–22.

‡ As in Psalms xl, l, and li.

§ Hebrews x, 6–9.

indignant rebuke,*—"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts. Bring no more vain oblations. Wash you, and make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes." And for them who will receive such counsel, he adds the promise of a lustral effect or cleansing that mere expiations do not even think of—"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." Jeremiah and Amos make the same remonstrance.† Micah turns the point of his rebuke directly down upon expiation itself; alluding to the manner in which the heathens offer their children, and suggesting a parallel between the superstitions of his own people in their heartless ostentations and penances of sacrifice, and the expiations of the false gods.‡ "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God."

When the Prophets, who are the preachers of

* Isaiah i, 10–18. † Jeremiah vii, 21–23; Amos v, 21–24.
‡ Micah vi, 6–8.

the old religion, are found speaking of its rites in this way, two things are evident; first, that the rites are very much outgrown by the moral and spiritual ideas developed; and secondly, that no such growth in reflective capacity has been accomplished, under any stimulus received from the placation of God by expiatory sacrifices.

7. The uses of blood in sacrifice have no such connection with an expiatory office, as appears to be supposed in the common modes of speaking concerning it. Something we say, must bleed, sin must draw blood before it can be forgiven—"without shedding of blood there is no remission." The blood is spoken of, and the bloody rites, and the bloody sweat, and the cross dripping blood, as if some dreadful inquest were gone forth against the world, and nothing could sate the divine anger but to see blood flow for a ransom. Now all such impressions are unhistoric and exactly contrary to the scripture ideas of blood; they carry, in fact, a strong scent of superstition. There is no vindictive figure in the scripture uses of blood. It is not death, but life, that is in it. Hedged about by walls of prohibition, as regards all common uses, it is made to be a holy element to men's feeling, that when it is applied, in the offering, it may seem to purify and quicken every thing it touches. As the blood is the life, so it is to be life-giving; a symbol of God's inward purifying and regenerating baptism in the remission of sins. The associations of blood are to have no such appalling, fateful hue as expiation sup-

Uses of blood not expiatory.

poses, or as they might get from battle-fields, and scaffolds, and the stains of midnight murder; it is not to be the blood that cries to God from the ground, but the blood that speaketh better things than that of Abel—peace, forgiveness, holiness, and life. And in just this view it is, that blood becomes a type of so great significance, in the higher uses of the Christly sacrifice itself—it is used, in this manner, not because it signifies expiation, but because God's promise, and forgiving, purifying love are in it as an element of life.

8. It is a fact worthy of distinct attention, that the passover sacrifice has certainly nothing of expiation in it.

The passover not expiatory.

This is the sacrifice that Christ is celebrating when he institutes his supper, and the blessing of the bread and wine in this first observance of the supper is probably the closing scene of the passover observance itself. Here it is that Christ, taking the cup, says,—"This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed, for many, for the remission of sins." And again, when it is mentioned at the crucifixion, as another point of correspondence, "that it might be fulfilled, a bone of him shall not be broken," the reference made is to the passover lamb.* And what is a more practical evidence of the close affiliation of the passover and the work of Christ, the passing by of the destroying angel, wherever the door-posts are found sprinkled with the blood of the lamb, is a good and expressive type, or symbol, of the deliverance of souls by the blood of Christ. And yet there is clearly no

* Exodus xii, 46.

thought of expiation for sin in the passover rite. It is given simply as a pledge of favor and deliverance to the people, and is continued afterwards not as an expiatory, but as a commemorative and partly festive rite. "Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day, [the passover] shall be a feast unto the Lord. And thou shalt shew thy son, in that day, saying—This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me, when I came forth out of Egypt."* Finding thus no reference whatever, in the rite, to an expiation of sin, how much shall we expect to find in the grand passover grace of Christ himself, taken as a continuance of it, and represented by the Christian supper taken from it?

9. Observe in this connection how these rites of blood, or bloody sacrifice, are connected habitually with all the most joyous and grandest religious festivities. All the pomps, jubilees, historic commemorations, public reformations, national deliverances, are celebrated in rivers of blood, and lift their joy, by the smoke of burnt offerings, coupled with processions of music and shouts of praise. In this way, the sacrifices get invested with associations that make the phrase "sacrifices of joy" synonymous with sacrifice itself. Thus David celebrates the preparation made for the building of the temple, in the sacrifice of a thousand bullocks, and a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, and the people eat and drink "before the Lord on that day, with joy and gladness."† Solomon again celebrates the dedication

The festivities of sacrifices against expiation.

* Exodus xiii, 6–8. † 1 Chronicles xxix, 21–22.

of the temple, in a grand festivity of sacrifice, continued for a whole week, in which twenty thousand oxen and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep are offered.* Hezekiah's feast of reformation and his passover that followed,† are celebrated in the same profusion of blood, and sacrifice, and joy. In all which it is sufficiently evident, that burnt-offerings and rites of blood are not associated, whether in the passover institution or elsewhere, with notions of penal sanction for sin, or contributed as expiations to avert God's anger on account of it.

10. It is important, as a final consideration, to notice that, where the rite of sacrifice bears a look of expiation, and the instances are taken as facts of expiation, a closer examination shows, in every case, that the impression is not supported by the transaction. The sacrifice of Job for his sons may be taken as an example. As they are feasting, and as it would seem roistering in excess from day to day, he is afflicted with concern for them, and goes before God with his daily offering on their account, saying—"It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts."‡ But this, at most, is a supplicatory, not an expiatory offering; for he is even hoping, it will be observed, that so great sin may not have been committed; and the mere contingency of sin is certainly no fit occasion for expiation. As we just now saw, in the case of Saul, sacrifice was even commonly considered to be a way of prayer.

The sacrifice of Job.

* 2 Chron. vii, 5. † 2 Chron. xxix and xxx. ‡ Job i, 5.

Besides this sacrifice of Job, I find no other historic instance or example, where there is even so much as a semblance of the expiatory character. But there is a complete day's-work of sacrifice circumstantially prescribed, a great day of atonement, sometimes called "the great day of expiation," sometimes *the day*, where the remembrance of sins, once a year, is religiously observed, and where, as it is commonly believed, expiation is the simple and sole office of the observance. Here, if any where, the fact of an expiatory sacrifice will be found. I shall therefore conclude my investigation of this very important question, by a careful review of the solemnities of the day referred to, as they are detailed in the record of its institution.

The great day of expiation without expiation.

It is a day specially devoted, we shall see, to the guilty and bad state of sin and the sublime need it creates of a reconciliation with God. The intention plainly is to make it the most serious and impressive day of the year; a day of strong conviction and, if possible, of hearty repentance and true turning unto God. A whole chapter and a long one,* is occupied with a specification of the observances. But we shall be struck, in the review of them, not with any discovery of an expiatory element, but with the fact, that every thing is ordered with such a manifestly artistic study and skill, to beget, in minds too crude for the reflective modes of exercise, a whole set of impressions answering to those of the christian doctrine of salvation; the holiness of God,

* Leviticus xvi.

the uncleanness and deep guilt of sin, and the faith of God's forgiving mercy. The whole day, from sunset to sunset, as Jahn describes it, is to be a day of strict fasting. All the common works of life are to cease, and the people are to have it as a day in which to "afflict their souls." Not that, by such self-affliction, an expiatory penance or pain is to be suffered for sin. The same expression is familiarly used by us in reference to fasting, with no thought certainly of expiation. It simply means that, with and by help of it, we may settle our mind into a just impression of the unworthiness and guiltiness of our sin, and feel it as we ought in the sorrow of a true repentance. We do not afflict ourselves that God may be placated by our pains, but we choke down the appetites, we put the body under by a violent downward thrust, and proclaim a truce to the strivings of gain, that, in stillness and before God, we may receive a just impression of our ill-desert as sinners.

Having the day fenced about in this manner, and devoted to such purposes, all the rites of the day are contrived to give it effect. A kind of fundamental conception which lies back of all and colors every thing in the feeling, is that there is a universal, overspreading uncleanness to be removed,—"because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins." It is as if every thing handled, touched, breathed upon, or even looked upon by them, had taken some defilement from them; "the holy sanctuary," "the tabernacle of the congregation,'

"the altar," "the priests," and "all the people of the congregation;" all which are accordingly to be atoned, or purified, in turn. And the rites of the day are all so ordered as to produce the profoundest impression possible of the separateness, or holiness of God; also to encourage the faith of his acceptance, and of the actual remission; that is, of the removal or cleansing of, the sin.

The high priest forbidden, on pain of death to enter the holy of holies, the sacred recess of the temple where God dwells, on any other day of the year, is this day to go in and be accepted there for himself and the people. This he is to do, putting the people back even from the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may not come too nigh, while their sin is upon them. He is to be anointed and sanctified for this, with a particular ointment, not to be made or used for any other purpose on pain of death.* And the incense he is to offer is made by a divine recipe, and is to be kept sacred in the same manner, for this particular use.† And the blood he is to sprinkle on the mercy-seat, and the altar, and the tabernacle of the congregation, is made sacred, as was just now observed, by a fixed separation, under the same penalty, from all common uses; because it has in it the sacred mystery of life. The offerings too, the bullock that is offered for the priest, and the goat that is offered for the people, are permitted, in no part, to be eaten, as in the ordinary and more festive celebrations; but are to be carried outside of the camp, or city, and

* Exodus xxx, 30–33. † Exodus xxx, 34–38.

there to be wholly burned; because they are supposed to bear the taint of the sin upon them. And to make the impression more complete, that the sin is taken away, the men who carry out the offerings to burn them, come back, as unclean, publicly washing themselves for their cleansing. And, to make the removing of the sin more impressive, it is dramatically represented, by the introduction of another goat beside the one that is offered, on the head of which the priest is to confess and representatively place all the sins of the people, and which is to be driven out alive, bearing "on him all their iniquities, into a land not inhabited." And then, as the man who drove out the goat, having such uncleanness upon him, must be supposed to have suffered defilement in consequence, he is to return and wash himself, in token of his cleansing.

And the conclusion of all is, not that certain penalties for sin are satisfied, or removed by expiation, but that the sin itself is covered, or taken away. "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord."

I do not, of course, affirm that every worshiper concerned in the rites of the day is *ipso facto* justified, born of God. In all such rites of the altar, two results are concerned, going along, or designed to go, together, but under very different conditions. First there is to be a ceremonial cleansing, which is wrought absolutely, every person concerned being made ceremonially clean. And secondly, there is or is designed to

be, a moral and spiritual cleansing, wrought implicitly, or transactionally; every thing as regards exercise and impression being adjusted to favor, and make it the privilege of the worshiper, if only he, on his part, will offer his heart to it. If he takes the sense of his uncleanness with a true feeling, if he is so cast down by it that he wants to comfort himself in seeing all most sacred things offered for his sin; if he truly believes that God, in the holy of holies, receives him, and that what the scape-goat signifies is a confidence truly given him; then he is more than ceremonially clean; the seeds of a better life are quickened in his heart. And this is what the promise signifies; it speaks of a privilege given, not of a fact accomplished,—"that *ye may be* clean from all your sins before the Lord."

There is then I conclude, for that is the result to which we are brought by this very careful inquiry, no such thing as expiation in the sacrifices of the Old Testament religion. And I hardly need say how great a satisfaction it is, and what strength it contributes to the evidences of this ancient, or ante-christian dispensation of God, to find that it is clear of a notion so abhorrent to all right feeling, and so essentially dishonorable to God. And the discovery is the more satisfactory, that it puts so wide a gulf of distance between this ancient, divine institute, and the crudities of barbarism and superstition that infest the sacrifices of all the contemporary and even subsequently developed religions of paganism; proving, at once, the immense superiority

Result, how honorable to the Hebrew Scriptures.

it has to all such growths of superstition, and establishing, as it were by incontrovertible evidence, its essentially divine origin.

No expiation, of course, in the sacrifice of Christ.

It is scarcely necessary, after this extended exposition of the Old Testament sacrifices, to show, by a distinct argument, that there is no such thing as expiation, in the proper and defined sense of the term, in the sacrifice of Christ. Only two or three passages occur to me in the New Testament, that even appear to allow such a construction, without a look of violence. Thus when Caiaphas * "thought it expedient that one should die for the people," and so "prophesied" verbally, without inspiration, I think it likely that he was contriving how the murder of Christ, in the pious pretext of an expiation for the people, was altogether expedient; and probably enough too, he believed in expiations; but it does not follow that he would be a reliable teacher of Christian doctrine. The conception of Paul † that "Christ is made a curse for us," is cited often as a text for expiation. But the meaning is exhausted, when he is conceived to simply come into the corporate state of evil, and bear it with us—faithful unto death for our recovery. The text most commonly cited as a conclusive and indubitable assertion of expiation, is that which was just now referred to—"for without shedding of blood there is no remission."‡ As if the word "blood" were to be taken with all our uncircumcised associations of murder and death and terror upon it, not as a life-

* John xi, 50. † Galatians iii, 13. ‡ Heb. ix, 22.

giving and restoring word; and as if the word "remission" were to have our lightest, most superficial, merely human meaning of a letting go; when we know that, in order to really mean any thing in religion, it must signify an *executed* remission, an inward, spiritual release or cleansing. Suppose then that our great apostle had said, what to him signifies exactly the same thing, "for without the life-renewing blood there is no cleansing for sin." It is difficult to speak with due patience of this unhappy text, so long compelled to grind in the mill of expiation; turning out, always, in the slow rotation of centuries, this creak of harsh announcement, that God must have some bloody satisfaction, else he can not let transgression go!

The supposed effects of expiation remain, without expiation.

Sometimes it is imagined, that there is a peculiar and most sacred impression of God and his law made upon us, by the assertion of expiation, or penal satisfaction; as for example, in this text. There stands, it is said, the inexorable, awe-inspiring fidelity of God, and the conscience-piercing word that tells of the immovable necessity by which he is holden, wakens an impression of too great power and benefit to be willingly lost. A theologic friend, whose opinions I much respect, can not break loose from the dogma of expiation, or penal satisfaction, though it confessedly infringes somewhat on his rational convictions and even his moral sentiments, because he imagines, in the impression just referred to, that it must have some transcendental virtue, which, without knowing exactly whence

it comes, or how it works, proves it to be from God. Now there certainly is an impression of great value made upon us by this same text, and it is the deeper, both for the conscience and the heart, when it is taken with no moral offense of expiation, or penal satisfaction, included. And yet the reference of it to God's inexorable fidelity, and the sense of an immovable necessity by which he is holden, is here made good as before. Here stands, fast by God's throne, the everlasting *must*, commanding even righteousness to suffer, that justifying grace may have its way. For there comes out here, in grand, appalling mystery, the immovable necessity and everlasting fact, that goodness in all moral natures has a doom of bleeding on it, allowing it to conquer only as it bleeds. We can not even contrive a way for it to be, in this or any other universe, without having pains to suffer and deaths to undergo. Why, the simple thought of ascending into good, puts us, forthwith, in a condition of great cost, and if we should come off without the shedding of blood, that will at least be a good type of what we are required to suffer. Our hatred of sin is a pain, our struggle with it painful every way. Pity is itself a pain, beneficence for pity's sake a state of war. If we give ourselves to truth, truth is unpopular, and we may have to die for it. Good in no shape, whether of love or mercy, can press upon evil, without being maligned, or conspired against; and it is well if the evil is not exasperated, even up to the point of phrensy and bloody violence. Good laws and liberties cost blood. Slavery is vanquish

ed and wild rebellion crushed, only by what years of suffering, and how many blood-sodden fields of conflict. The inexorable law is upon us—"And without shedding of blood there is no remission." All good conquers by a cross, and without a cross it is nothing. Ascending hence to God, we go not above this doom, this inexorable law, but simply go up to the point where it culminates, and whence it begins. The eternal righteousness of God has in it this inherent doom of war. It must suffer, it must bleed, and only so can reign. The cross is in it, even before the foundation of the world. We have, in our theodicy, all manner of ingenious showings, but the short account of God's great way and work is, that goodness and right must propagate goodness and right; and must therefore create souls capable of goodness and right; which also, being capable of badness and wrong, will infallibly propagate badness and wrong. And this is evil—evil to be mastered, cleansed, forgiven. Evil therefore lowers over the eternal possibilities of God, and God is linked, in that manner, by a prior, unalterable necessity to conflict and suffering; so that if the good that is in him will get into men's bosoms, it must bleed into them. "*Ought* not Christ to suffer?" "For it *became* him, [it was even a fixed necessity upon him,] for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." And so returns upon us, still again, the same great text of expiation—"and without shedding of blood there is no re-

mission"—returns with a face wholly turned away from expiation, and yet with no abatement of the power. What, in fact, can be more impressive, than the inherently tragic fidelity of good—that which, at the summit of omnipotence, will not swerve from being confronted with evil, and suffering for it, and bleeding to cleanse it?

Atonement resumed and shown to be at-one-ment.

We are brought on thus, finally, to the conclusion, that expiation is no Christian idea, and is not contained in the Christian Scriptures. Excluding it then, as a false third meaning given to the Hebrew word *cover*, we return to the two others, assigned for it in our English translation, *atonement* and *propitiation*, and resume the discussion of these, at the point where we left them, in the beginning of the chapter.

To atone, or make atonement then, is to remove transgression itself, or reconcile the transgressor. It fulfills, in a figure, the original physical sense of the word to cover; as when, for example, the ark was covered with pitch. It is such a working on the bad mind of sin as at-ones it, reconciles it to God, covers up and hides forever the wrong of transgression, assures and justifies the transgressor. In one word, constantly applied to it in the atonements of the old ritual, it makes clean. The effect is wholly subjective, being a change wrought in all the principles of life and characters and dispositions of the soul.

A passage from the Epistle to the Romans * is some-

* Rom. v, 10.

times cited in support of a different conclusion—"For, if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled shall we be saved by his life." This reconciliation denotes simply a change of condition, it is said, not of character; a being brought upon the new footing of pardon; for it is something accomplished "when we were enemies." The reconciliation therefore signifies the placation of God, and not our restoration to God. What then remains, following the same style of argument, under the conditions of time, but to infer that our salvation by Christ is to be accomplished wholly by his life; that is, by his second life, after the resurrection? Whereas, if we can take a more dignified way of construction, we shall understand the apostle to be only raising an argument of degrees, for the confidence of our complete salvation—For if when we were yet enemies God undertook our reconciliation by the death of his Son, much more, being now reconciled, will he stand by us, since he lives again to finish the salvation begun.

Atonement then, as applied to Christ, is just what is figured so carefully in the atonement of the ancient sacrifice. For as every thing about the temple was reconsecrated and made clean, by the sacred things offered in the sacrifice—the sacred incense burned before the mercy-seat, and the sacred blood sprinkled on whatever had taken the defilement of our sin—so the sprinkling of the far more sacred blood of Jesus, dying as the Lamb of God, in the volunteer obedience of his vicarious sacrifice, reconsecrates the law broken by our sin, dishon-

ored and defiled by our defilement, and by its life-touch in our feeling and faith, purges our consciousness from dead works, to serve the living God. And as the old sacrifice made a remembrance of sins every year, and opened a way, once a year, into the holy of holies, so Christ, by an offering once for all, has made a reconciliation that is perfect and complete; so that we may all, as being now made priests unto God and ourselves, enter at all times and with boldness, into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus. That altar blood, or sprinkling, purified the patterns of the heavenly things; this other, holier sprinkling, the heavenly things themselves; viz., God's throne, law, and truth—every thing defiled by our transgressions—and also our transgressions themselves.

The true Christian idea of *propitiation* is not far hence. The pagan color of the word is taken off; there is no such thought as that God is placated or satisfied, by the expiatory pains offered him. It supposes, first, a subjective atoning, or reconciliation in us; and then, as a farther result, that God is objectively propitiated, or set in a new relation of welcome and peace. Before he could not embrace us, even in his love. His love was the love of compassion; now it is the love of complacency and permitted friendship. This objective propitiation of God answers exactly to another objective conception, commonly held without any thought of correspondence. Thus we have a way of saying, as regards successful prayer, that it *prevails with God.* Is it then our mean-

Propitiation and prevailing prayer.

ing that it turns God's mind, makes him better, more favorable, more inclined to bestow the things we seek? Probably enough many persons think so, and it is much better that they should, than to conclude, with many others, that it accomplishes nothing; obtaining no gifts that would not have been given as certainly without any prayer at all. But the true conception is this—that God has instituted an economy of prayer to work on Christian souls and brotherhoods and churches, encouraging them to come and make suit to him, for the blessings they need. This draws them nearer to him than before, chastens their spirit, kindles their holy desires and aspirations, unites them to aims of mercy like his own, brings them into a more complete faith, bands them together, two, or three, or many, in a more living fellowship of heart; and so, having gotten them, by this economy, into a state more configured to himself—which is the very object for which he orders the world—he is now able to grant, or dispense, things which before he could not, and he is prevailed with. Is he then better than before? is he induced to alter his plans? No, by no means. But he has now new subjects, or subjects in a new relationship, and if he were now to carry on all the courses of events, just as if the prayers were not, he would even violate a first principle of nature, that every event shall have its own consequences. Prayers are events like all others, and what forbids that, having their consequences, the consequences should be answers?

God then is propitiated by a change of relationship, that permits him to greet the souls whom Christ has

reconciled, in cordial welcome, as he otherwise could not—just as he is prevailed with in prayers, that are new conditions prepared for new blessings. And that this is the true conception is most effectually shown by the standard text itself, in that particular clause which was reserved to this point of the argument*—"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood." The apostle does not say, it will be observed —"propitiation through his blood"—as the scheme of expiation requires, but "propitiation *through faith* in his blood." No propitiation therefore reaches the mark, that does not, on its way, reconcile, or bring into faith, the subject for whom it is made. There is no God welcome prepared, which does not open the guilty heart to welcome God.

Objective propitiation supposes subjective faith.

The apostle, in this manner, takes away from the Greek word he uses, which it must be confessed is commonly used by the pagan writers in a way that implies expiation, any possibility of such a meaning; for they have never a thought of any such thing as an expiation through faith; and, what is more, expiation itself excludes the supposition, that any kind of moral condition is necessary in the subject for whom it is offered; the very idea being, that it avails, as being a contribution of evils to obtain the release of evils; not as having now a state of faith prepared, as a new receptivity for good. I know not how often this language of the apostle is quoted, as if it asserted a propitiation

* Rom. iii, 28.

that is accomplished before faith, and wholly apart from faith; a placation of God that has respect to no human conditions whatever—precisely that which he carefully and even formally excludes.

Atonement then is a change wrought in us, a change by which we are reconciled to God. Propitiation is an objective conception, by which that change, taking place in us, is spoken of as occurring representatively in God. Just as guilty minds, thrown off from God, glass their feeling representatively in God, imagining that God is thrown off from them; or just as we say that the sun rises, instead of saying, what would be so very awkward to us, and yet is the real truth, that we ourselves rise to the sun. The necessity and uses of this objective language will be considered more at large, in the remaining chapter, and therefore need not be insisted on here, as in reference to the single word propitiation.

CHAPTER III.

PRACTICAL USES AND WAYS OF PREACHING.

After we have gone over the whole ground of the gospel as a work of vicarious sacrifice, settled the doctrine, found the meaning of the Scripture symbols, there still remain some very important practical questions respecting the modes of preaching and use. Neither can these questions be dispatched, by what may seem to be the ready and simple conclusion, that we are to preach and apply to our own lives just what we have found to be true, neither more nor less. For to preach what is true *concerning* a matter, and to preach the matter *itself*, may be very different things. So if we speak of use, or application to our own spiritual state, we may only fool ourselves in the endeavor to get our benefit out of what is true concerning the gospel, when all true benefit lies in a right appropriation of the gospel itself. As concerning Christ, we have made up our account of his work, in the conclusion that he is in the world to be the moral power of God upon it; but it does not follow that we shall preach him, or receive him, in the most effectual way, by contriving always how to be in the power, and muster the power upon us. His truth may be most

Truth concerning Christ not Christ.

powerful, when we think least of the power, and have our mind wholly turned away, in love and trust, from ourselves. If I have a much honored and powerful friend, by whose great character I would like to model my own, I shall not do it probably by contriving always, artificially and consciously, how to get his efficacy upon me; but I shall be much with him, and putting faith in him, I shall breathe the atmosphere he makes, even as I do the air without contriving how to live by it; I shall admire his sentiments and his bearing in great crises of trial; I shall find a pleasure in meeting his wishes, and doing what I may, to advance the cause that engages him. Thinking nothing thus of getting a power upon me from his person, I shall be only the more completely pervaded and molded by his power. A glance in this direction is sufficient to show, that the preaching and personal uses of the gospel are a subject widely distinct from the truth concerning it.

Various kinds of preaching.

The gospel will of course be preached and applied to use in modes that have some agreement with what it is conceived to be. Thus if Christ be accepted only as a great moral teacher and reformer, the preaching over of his preaching, as recorded in the four gospels, will be the main thing, and almost nothing will be made of his personal life and death, and the reconciling purpose of his mission. Preaching will be teaching as the Master taught, even as the pupils of the Academy, the Porch, or the Peripatetic order, followed the school of their master. The after-developments of his mission and the significance

of it, as completed by the cross, and opened by the Holy Spirit—just that which the apostles received and published, when they preached him as the Saviour of sinners—will be virtually ignored. Precisely what made the day of pentecost will be omitted.

If the gospel is conceived to be merely an array of legal motives addressed to interest, and so contrived as to cast a preponderating balance always on the side of right choices, then there will be cogent appeals to the conscience, and the fears, and the love of happiness, and so to the will-power of the subjects addressed. And then, for such as choose rightly, Christ will be shown to have prepared a ground of forgiveness; and beyond that as the principal account of his mission, will be conceived to have no particular agency in the transformations to be wrought. This kind of preaching will take on a strenuous air, and will sometimes stir great commotions where only motions would be better. The piety thus resulting will be legal; a kind of will-work, too little freshened by the graceful affections, too little enriched by great sentiments, lifted by no inspirations, save when slipping, by chance, the legal detentions, it seizes the forbidden fruit of liberty.

Another characteristic mode of preaching is produced by preaching a formula, supposed to be the very equivalent and substantial import of the gospel. And we have abundance of complaints, from such as mean to be faithful in this way, that Christ is now so little preached. They mean that Christ is not preached as an expiation, or a satisfaction to God's justice, or an

exposition of God's abhorrence to sin. The substance of their complaint is really that a formula is not preached instead of Christ; that, too, a formula so painfully untrue as to make itself felt more often as a violation of natural feeling, than as a saving power upon it. If only this be preaching Christ, it will be a long time before he is preached in a way to satisfy this kind of complaint.

The very idea of preaching Christ by formula, even if the true formula were developed, is a great mistake; for whatever mind goes into limitation or incrustation under formula becomes sterile, and the gospel on which it perpetually hammers will be meager, and weak, and dry. All the ten thousand flaming truths that are crowding in, as troops of glory, on the thoughts of a soul in liberty, asking as it were to be uttered faster than the Sundays will let them, are suppressed, or shut back, by that inevitable little sentence of wisdom, which has concluded every thing. I will not deny that some general account or scheme of the gospel plan may be convenient, for the mind to fall back upon and gather itself into, for the minting and due authentication of its issues. But a formula to be preached, and maintained as a gospel, is a very different matter—all the worse, if it has only been received pedagogically, and been set as the hand-organ tune which the school is engaged to play. Any formula is a necessary abortion, which is not the formulization of Christ discovered by the heart, and verified by a deep-working Christian experience.

Let us see if we can arrive at some better and more

adequate conception of preaching. Christ is here, according to the doctrine of this treatise, to be the moral power of God on the world, so the power of God unto salvation. But if any one should set himself to preaching only this, turning it round and round, citing texts for it, and arguing down objections, he would only postpone the power he undertakes to assert. Christ will be the power, only as he is himself in that which makes him the power; viz., all that he was, did, and expressed, in his life and death and resurrection—Saviour of sinners and Judge of the world. We have seen him, for example, fulfilling the love principle in vicarious suffering for us; revealing, in his obedience, God's everlasting obedience to law; adding vigor to law by his tremendous enforcements; doing honor to God's retributive justice, by subjecting himseif to all the corporate evils it brings on the human state; and by all these methods, declaring so impressively the righteousness of God, as to prepare the glorious possibility and fact of a free justification—these are all great truths for preaching, greater each of them singly in its power, than the general truth which includes them all; and yet when these again are subdivided, and run out into all the thousand facts and subjects included, they will ring even the more impressively in each one, because it is farther off from what is general and closer to the concrete matter of Christ's personal life. The subjects are endless, and the power inexhaustible.

The true kind described.

I think we shall best conceive the subject matter of preaching and in that sense the mode, if we specify three

distinct elements which must be included, and are necessary to the genuine power.

1. There must be a descent to human nature in its lower plane of self-love and interested motive, and a beginning made with the conscience, the fears, and the boding expectations of guiltiness. To convince, intimidate, waken out of stupor, shake defiant wrong out of its confidences, must be deliberately undertaken and, if possible, effectively done. There must be no delicacy here; as if God's love and the vicarious ministry of Jesus were too softly good, to do any so rugged and severe thing as to punish. Christ's own doctrine of future punishment, Christ as the judge of the world, all that belongs to God's law, all that will be done by God's justice, the very *dies iræ* of the wrath to come, must be faithfully declared, and that in a manner that indicates conviction. Of course there must be no violence, under pretext of suffering no delicacy, but a manner of tenderness that indicates due sensibility in a matter so appalling. The true conception is, that as God's justice is a co-factor with his mercy, it is to be set forth and magnified and made real in the same way, and for the same purpose. And no better model can be taken for this than Christ himself. Nor is any thing more certain, than that whoever gives in to the feeling that Christ is outgrown in this matter, has really no gospel to preach—his vocation is gone. For if Christ did not understand himself here, what reason is there to believe that he understood himself at all? In this dilemma one may think he has a

God's law and justice to be preached.

gospel, and a specially superlative kind of gospel, but it will be nerveless and without sound; like the headless drums that marching children sometimes carry, beating on the rim. God is a just God, and if he is not shown to be, but only to be a beautiful God, or a gentle and loving God, sin will be abundantly reconciled to him staying where it is. There is no salvation here, and no power of salvation is wanted. There may be a dressing of the soul in what is called beauty of character, but the character will be only a beautiful affectation. But we pass to the saving side of the gospel, that in which the personal power of Christ's sacrifice is specially designed to operate. And here we shall find—

2. That a very great and principal office of preaching will consist in a due exhibition of the Christian facts.

The facts of Christ's life to be magnified.

The power is to be personal, and will therefore lie in the facts of the personal life. These facts therefore are preëminently the good news that composes the gospel; requiring heralds, or preachers [*precones*,] to go abroad and publish it. Apart from these facts, the great subjects we have spoken of are nothing. They spring out of the facts and have no basis of reality beside. Hence also it is that in the Apostles' creed, or first recorded confession of Christ, nothing is included but the simple outline facts of his life; no other and better formula being yet conceived or attempted. Here accordingly is the original and truly grand office of preaching; viz., in the setting forth and fit representation of these gospel facts.

They begin with the grand primal fact of the incarnation; for it is only in that, and by that mystery, that the person arrives whose history is to be entered into the world. Viewed in this light, the person arriving is not merely a man, but, as we must believe, a veritable God-man. Taken as being simply a man, the facts of his life would certainly be remarkable and valuable; he would only be a much greater and more incredible mystery, considering the morally perfect, and therefore superhuman character he is in, than he is when conceived as an abnormal, extra-mundane person, let into the world from above it, to fulfill a specially divine mission. All the after-facts change color and consequence, accordingly, as they are viewed in one mode or the other. Considered as the God-man, there is not a single fact, or scene, in the history which, fitly conceived, does not yield some lesson of power; the infancy; the thirty years of silent preparation; the recoil of the poor human nature, called the temptation, when the work begins; every healing, every miracle, every friendship, every commendation, every denunciation, the lot of poverty, the hour of oppressed feeling, the weariness and sleep, the miraculous hem of his garment, the transfiguration, the prayers, the amazing assumptions of a common glory and right with the Father, the agony, the trial, the crucifixion, the resurrection, the appearings and tender teachings afterwards, and last of all the ascension, followed by the descent of the Spirit to represent and be himself, according to his promise, a Christ every where present, every where accessible—no

longer limited and localized in space—in all these and in all he said and taught concerning God, himself, and us, the preacher is to find staple matter for his messages. There is almost nothing, even as to his mere manners and modes, which, if he is truly alive—and no Christian man has a right to be dead—will not open some gate or crevice into chambers of glory, for the conscience or the heart.

A great fault of preaching has been here.

Here has been one of the great faults or deficiencies in the preaching of Christ. Too little, by a thousand fold, has been made of the facts of his life. By some they are almost never dwelt upon, with the exception, perhaps, of two or three that could not be utterly passed over; the rest are as if they were not. Commonly the feeling is not brought close enough to them to find the life that is in them—what can they signify of importance, after the main doctrine of all has been decocted? How much easier to preach the decoction and let the dried herbs of the story go. It might be so, if they were really dry; but since they are all alive, fresh and fragrant as a bank of roses, how much better to go and breathe among them and catch the quickening odors. How little indeed does any preacher know of the true gospel, who only finds a dull, stale matter, in the wonderful, morally sublime record of such a character! No good news will ever go forth out of him. He thinks he has exhausted the gospel and gotten the whole matter of it in his head, just because he has gotten nothing, and knows not that there is any thing to get, besides

what his formula contains. He mourns a little, it may be, over the want of power in his preaching, when in fact there ought to be no power, because there is no fact in the grand life-history of Jesus that is alive to him. He fails just where any really high ministry must begin; viz., in the ability to show forth Christ alive, in the facts that represent his living personality; thus to raise conviction, thus to keep interest in a glow, thus to conquer the heart and testify a Saviour who mediates peace.

I think it would be hardly possible for a preacher of Christ to be too much in the facts of his life. Only they must be so handled as to raise great subjects, and kindle the heat of a true fire, as they always may. The mere doling of these facts, or the setting them off in a garnish of scene-painting or mock sentiment, or frothy laudation, does not fulfill the idea of such preaching. Something worthy of God's love, something deifically great must be found in them, and the feeling must be raised, that he is personally nigh, rich in his gifts, strong in his majesty, terrible in his beauty, heavy-hearted and tender in the suffering concern of his love. We come next—

3. To another and more difficult matter, as regards the power of the gospel in its uses, and the due impression of it, as a way of salvation; viz., the right conception and fit presentation of it, under the altar forms provided for it. For, besides the outward figure of the facts, occurring under conditions of space and time, and

No sufficient gospel without the altar forms.

significant to human feeling in that manner, God has contrived a thought-form, to assist us in that kind of use which may conduct us into the desired state of practical reconciliation with himself. In the facts, outwardly regarded, there is no sacrifice, or oblation, or atonement, or propitiation, but simply a living and dying thus and thus. The facts are impressive, the person is clad in a wonderful dignity and beauty, the agony is eloquent of love, and the cross a very shocking murder triumphantly met, and if then the question rises, how we are to use such a history so as to be reconciled by it, we hardly know in what way to begin. How shall we come unto God by help of this martyrdom? How shall we turn it, or turn ourselves under it, so as to be justified and set in peace with God? Plainly there is a want here, and this want is met by giving a thought-form to the facts which is not in the facts themselves. They are put directly into the molds of the altar, and we are called to accept the crucified God-man as our sacrifice, an offering or oblation for us, our propitiation; so to be sprinkled from our evil conscience, washed, purged, purified, cleansed from our sin. Instead of leaving the matter of the facts just as they occurred, there is a reverting to familiar forms of thought, made familiar partly for this purpose, and we are told, in brief, to use the facts just as we would the sin-offerings of the altar, and make an altar grace of them—only a grace complete and perfect, an offering once for all. According to the Epistle to the Hebrews, the ancient ritual was devised by God, apart from its

liturgical uses, to be the vehicle in words of the heavenly things in Christ; molds of thought for the world's grand altar service, in Christ the universal offering; regulative conceptions for the fit receiving and effective use of the gospel.

And so much is there in this that, without these forms of the altar, we should be utterly at a loss in making any use of the Christian facts, that would set us in a condition of practical reconciliation with God. Christ is good, beautiful, wonderful, his disinterested love is a picture by itself, his forgiving patience melts into my feeling, his passion rends open my heart, but what is he for, and how shall he be made unto me the salvation I want? One word—he is my sacrifice—opens all to me and beholding him, with all my sin upon him, I count him my offering, I come unto God by him and enter into the holiest by his blood.

But the principal reason for setting forth the matter of Christ's life and death as an oblation remains to be stated; viz., the necessity of somehow preventing an over-conscious state in the receiver. It was going to be a great fault in the use, that the disciple, looking for a power on his character, would keep himself too entirely in the attitude of consciousness, or voluntary self-application. He would be hanging round each fact and scene, to get some eloquent moving effect from it. And he would not only study how to get impressions, but, almost ere he is aware of it, to make them. Just here accordingly it was that the Scripture symbols, and es-

Wanted to produce an attitude of objectivity.

pecially those of the altar service, were to come to our aid, putting us into a use of the gospel so entirely objective, as to scarcely suffer a recoil on our consciousness at all. The sacrificial offering was *in form*, an offering wholly to God, even as the smoke rolls up from the altar and comes not back. The result was that the worshiper was made clean; that is, according to the political, or statutory sense; and if, perchance, he was made clean in a deeper sense, it would be implicitly, just because his mind was going up wholly to God, with the smoke of his offering. So, when I conceive that Christ is my offering before God, my own choice Lamb and God's, brought to the slaying, and that for my sin, my thought moves wholly outward and upward, bathing itself in the goodness and grace of the sacrifice. Doubtless there will be a power in it, all the greater power that I am not looking after power, and that nothing puts me thinking of effects upon myself.

In this manner coming unto Christ, or to God through Christ, in the symbols of sacrifice, we make an escape, as it were, from ourselves and that state of consciousness which is the bane of religion; an escape, I must frankly admit, which is none the less necessary, when we conceive that Christ has come into the world, not to expiate sin, but to be a power upon it; furthermore, an escape which God has provided, to make him more completely a power. For it is in these symbols that God contrives to get us out of ourselves into the free state of faith, and love, and to become the new inspiration of life in our hearts. And accordingly we

should find, in the ready and free use of these symbols, our best means of grace, if only we could have them clear of misconstructions that often fatally corrupt their meaning. Oppressed with guilt, we should turn ourselves joyfully to Christ as the propitiation for our sins. Christ who hath borne the curse for us, Christ who knew no sin made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We should cry in our prayers; O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, take away our sins; or thinking of that sacred blood, by whose drops that fell as touches of life on the world's grand altar, Calvary, we should cry—wash us, O Christ, in the blood of thy cross and make us clean; or wanting, in despair of ourselves, some Helper and Friend to bear the sins we can not bear ourselves, we should take up tenderly the words of the poet, if not in his meaning, yet in the meaning which they ought to have—

> "My soul looks back to see
> The burdens thou didst bear,
> When hanging on the accursed tree,
> And hopes her guilt was there."

We want, in short, to use these altar terms, just as freely as they are used by those who accept the formula of expiation, or judicial satisfaction for sin; in just their manner too, when they are using them most practically. Indeed, it is one of the enviable advantages of their scheme that they are able to use them freely; for, when they are so used, they will not always keep themselves close in the dogmatic misconstructions

put upon them, but will often pour into the heart, in their true Scripture meaning, as chariots into some postern gate that is not closed. A more subjective gospel, one that looks to effects on character and the renewing of the life in God, has even a better right to their use; and they are almost indispensable, to save it from an otherwise nearly fatal subjectivity.

Objective terms a first want of language.

Nor is there any thing so peculiar in this need of an objective form for the gospel. We need what is like it every where, and human language is full of it. A very great part of the terms and expressions of language, and those that are liveliest and freshest, are such as put into things and facts meanings which are really not there, but in ourselves. We say that a thing is *painful* because we suffer pain from it; putting the pain into the thing, which is really in ourselves. We say, in the very palpable and common matters of color, that things are *red*, *blue*, *white*, and the like, when, as we all know, the colors are in us and not in the things. Subjectively speaking, we should have to say, awkwardly and pedantically, that we have sensations of redness, blueness, whiteness, before the things. We say that a thing has a *sweet taste*, when the sweet taste is not in the thing at all, but wholly in ourselves. The language of Christ, which is about as nearly perfect as it can be, abounds in these objective representations of subjective facts and ideas. Glance along the sermon on the mount, looking no farther, and we get examples like these, "If thy right eye offend thee"—"if thine eye be evil;" where

he has no thought of any thing blamable in the eye, or any thing without, offending the eye, but only of the lustful, or grudging soul, that looks through it. "Lead us not into temptation;" where he means, not that God might lead us into it, but that we need to be kept from leading ourselves into it. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven;" where he does not imagine that we have access to heaven, so that we can put in treasures there, but that we are to get heavenly treasures garnered in ourselves. Again—"straight is the gate, broad is the way;" where he seems to say that God's gate of life is made narrow, and his way of destruction broad. He could not raise any fit impression, by the real subjective fact, that our perverseness makes the gate of life narrow and difficult to enter, and the way of destruction broad and easy; so he puts the case objectively, willing, even at the expense of an almost seeming reflection upon God, to set us in a distinct feeling of the fearful alternative we are required to meet.

Hence the Devil, or bad king.

To carry these illustrations of the genius of language, and especially of Scripture language a little farther, and show, on how large a scale, the forms of truth are affected by the instinct of objective representation, I will refer to the devil, or ὁ διαβολος, of the Old and New Testament. Here we have a kind of bad God, over against the good, who leads the powers of darkness and manages the interest of evil. But there is no more reason to suppose that God has created any such being, or that any such really exists, than there is to suppose that there is a real

being called the prince of this world, or another called antichrist, or two others called Gog and Magog. The devil is that objective person, whose reality is the sum of all subjective seductions, or temptations to evil; viz., those of bad spirits, and those of the corrupted soul itself. These bad spirits, sometimes called Legion, together with our own bad thoughts, are all gathered up into a great king of art and mischief and called the devil. Whether it is done by some instinct of language, or some special guidance of inspiration, in the use of language, or both, we do not know; the latter is more probable. But however it came to pass, we can see that it serves a most important use in the economy of revelation. In the process of recovery to God, men must be convinced of their sins, and made thoroughly conscious of their guiltiness, and this requires a turning of their minds upon themselves in reflection and a state of piercingly subjective attention to their own ill desert. And yet they must be taken away, somehow, from a too close, or totally subjective attention, even to their sins. For if they are to be taken away from their ill desert and guiltiness, they must be drawn out into a movement of soul in exactly the opposite direction; viz., in the direction of faith which is outward. And this exactly is what the grand objective conception of the devil prepares and facilitates. First, their sin is all gathered up with its roots and causes into the Bad King conceived to be reigning without; and then it is permitted the penitent, or the disciple struggling with his enemy, to conceive that Christ, in whom he is called to

believe, is out in force, to subdue and crush the monster. And so he is helped away from the torment of a merely reflective state, even when contending with the sins of his own bosom.

Only two days previous to the writing of this paragraph I was conversing with a very intelligent and, withal, a truly liberal Christian friend, who said, as arguing for the existence of the devil, that he liked to think of such a being, in distinction from thinking always of his sins, about which he knew very little, and then to hang his faith on Christ as warring with him, and able to pluck him down; for this takes in every thing and makes a clean issue, when we do it, in the simplest manner possible. To which the very obvious reply was, that for this very purpose God has given us the objective devil of Scripture to be hated, and conspired against, and by faith cast down, when the real, multitudinous, inconceivable matter to be thus hated, conspired against, and by faith cast down, is working subjectively in ourselves. And, what is more, there is no other conception of the devil of Scripture that makes him so profoundly real as this; partly because there is no other that has any look of credibility.

We find then, as we look at language, whether out of the Scriptures or in, that objective representations are always best for us, most sought after, and prepared on a very large scale, because they take us away from mere self-management, and carry us out to rest our hope and faith in God. If we represented every thing subjectively which is subjective, we could do it only by using

the most awkward and tedious circumlocutions. In one view, these outward projections of what is within are not true, and yet they are the more vigorously true for that reason. Shut up to saying every thing subjectively, our language would be only a torment.

Any strictly subjective style of religion is vicious. It is moral self-culture, in fact, and not religion. We think of ourselves abundantly in the selfishness of our sins. What we need, above all, is to be taken off the self-center and centered in God. Ceasing to go by contrivance, we must learn to go by inspiration; that is, by the free impulse of God in our faith. Hence the profound importance of the altar symbols, divinely prepared and fashioned, to be the form of the Christian grace. They compose for us even a kind of objective religion; that is, a religion operated for us and before us. In one view they are not true, just as the ten thousand objective expressions of language referred to are not, and yet there is nothing so sublimely, healthfully true, in the practical and free uses of faith, because we are so simple in them, and so completely carried out of ourselves. Of course we shall be conscious beings still; we must be conscious always and in every thing we do; but how much does it signify that we can have an altar and an offering, once for all, where we can go with our confession, and pay our tender worship, without thinking, for the time, of any thing but what is before us and is done for us. Here it is that we drop out self most easily, and come away to God, in

The outgoing state is thus secured.

a liberty most perfectly unembarrassed by the habit of our guilty self-devotion. In the sacrifice we cling to and call our own, we are respited, and the ceasing from our will, makes us plastic to the grace that molds us. The new element we are in is peace; we are atoned, reconciled.

But we encounter, at this point, a very great difficulty, in the fact that all these Scripture symbols have been so long and dreadfully misapplied, by the dogmatic schemes of expiation, penal suffering, and judicial satisfaction. Thus, if we attempt to use them, we are disturbed by the feeling, that neither we, nor they, will be understood, in any sense that is true. How shall we venture to speak of Christ as a sacrifice for sin, when even the ritual sacrifice, on which the figure is based, has been made to signify, not a confessional offering, or offering of pious devotion, in which the worshiper is turned to God, but the offering of a substituted victim, to even the penal account with God, or reconcile God to him? So of all the other symbols; the lamb is the victim, in the sense that he suffers; the slaying of the victim is death for death, and the dying of the victim is pain for pain; when truly nothing was made, either of the death, or the pain, but only of the offering of some choicest animal, as a reverently careful act of homage and repentance for sin. The blood sprinkled here and there is no more the life, that sacred element which pacifies every thing it touches, but it is the blood of slaughter, signifying that God is reconciled only when sin draws blood.

A great difficulty met.

Even the bearing of sin by the scape-goat—a beautifully contrived figure, to signify the deportation of sin—what is it but the certain fact of theology, that, if sins are to be removed, they must yet be borne by somebody? In the same way atonement is not the covering of sin, or the reconciliation of the sinner, but it is that paying for sin which evens the account. And so of all the lustral figures—making clean, washing, purifying, purging, sprinkling by the hyssop branch—they only mean that expiation is complete, and a clean, or even account made by it. So, too, of the extra-ritual figures. Redemption and ransom are not figures of release from captivity, but penal satisfactions paid to even the account of justice. The stripes that heal, too, are become the stripes that satisfy God's wrath.

What then shall we do with these forms of the altar, when they have come to be thus sadly disfigured and turned from their true meaning? Shall we use them freely and rightly, and let such impressions be taken as certainly will be? Shall we use them with salvos and parentheses of explanation? That would be awkward and troublesome and besides would despoil them of all right effect. Shall we then give them up entirely and let them go? Many, alas, are doing it, contriving how to find a sufficient gospel in the forms of the facts themselves, described in the terms of common speech. And the result is, that they preach a philosophy of Christ instead of the Christian oblation, a Christ who is to work on souls under the natural laws of effect, and not a Christ to be our sacrifice before God. We can not

afford to lose these sacred forms of the altar. They fill an office which nothing else can fill, and serve a use which can not be served without them. It may perhaps be granted that, considering the advance of culture and reflection now made, we should use them less, and the forms of common language more; still we have not gotten by the want of them and we never shall. The most cultivated, most intellectual disciple wants them now and will get his dearest approaches to God in their use. We can do without them, it may be, for a little while; but after a time we seem to be in a gospel that has no atmosphere, and our breathing is a gasping state. Our very repentances are hampered by too great subjectivity, becoming as it were a pulling at our own shoulders. Our subjective applications of Christ get confused and grow inefficacious. Our very prayers and thanksgivings get introverted and muddled. Trying to fight ourselves on in our wars, courage dies and impulse flags. And so we begin to sigh for some altar, whither we may go and just see the fire burning, and the smoke going up, on its own account, and circle it about with our believing hymns; some element of day, into which we may come, and simply see, without superintending the light.

No, these much abused symbols are indispensable and must be recovered. It may be a task of some difficulty, yet of much less difficulty than many suppose. It only requires a little resolute courage here, as always, to retake a battery that is lost. Let the preacher go before, in one or two

How to get back the lost symbols.

discourses, showing what the sacrifices were not, and what they were; then how Christ, without expiation, becomes an offering for us, our lamb, our blood of remission, fulfilling the highest reality of sacrifice, and meeting all our highest Christian uses, in such molds of sacrifice; and then let him throw himself on the using of all these altar figures freely, allowing just such impressions to be taken as there sometimes probably will be; still going on without any sensitive concern. The result will be that, in a little while, the abused terms will right themselves and come into their places, rejoicing as it were in their own redemption, as the souls they fructify rejoice in the grace they minister by their use. And this act of reclamation is due to the Scriptures not less than to our ourselves. Not even the grand Scripture doctrine of justification by faith can be named in many places, without raising associations that are painful—such as follow in the train of penal suffering, expiatory death, literal substitution, judicial satisfaction, legally imputed righteousness. And this being so, there is no loyal way left but to retake the whole field, and restore all these lost symbols to their rightful meanings and places.

Our doctrine ends where the first age began.

I could not excuse myself, in the closing of this last chapter, if I did not call attention directly to the very instructive and somewhat humbling fact, that we are ending here, just where Christianity began. After passing round the circuit of more than eighteen centuries, occupied

alas! how largely, in litigations of theory and formula, we come back, at last, to say, dropping out all the accumulated rubbish of our wisdom, preach Christ just as the Apostolic Fathers, and the Saints of the first three centuries did; viz., in the facts of his personal life and death; and these facts in the forms of the altar; and withal in his judgment sanctions, and his second coming to judge the world. If we look at the effects wrought, these first three centuries of Christian preaching have never been matched in any other three, and yet they had no formula at all of atonement, and had not even begun, as far as we can discover, to have any speculative inquiries on the subject. All our most qualified historians agree in this, and we can see for ourselves, from the epistles of Clement and other Apostolic Fathers so called, that no such inquiries had yet arrived. Is it then to be the end of all our litigations, theories, and attempted scientific constructions, that, after our heats of controversy have cooled, and our fires of extirpation have quite burned away, we come back to the very same kind of preaching alphabet, in which the first fathers had their simple beginnings? Be it so, and yet the labor we have spent is by no means lost. We shall come back into that first preaching, with an immense advantage gained over these fathers. What they did in their simplicity, we shall do in a way of well-instructed reason. Their simplicity, in fact, supposed the certainty of all these long detours of labor and contest afterwards to come; but we, in our return, come back with our experiments all made, and detours all ended,

not simply to preach Christ in just their manner, but to do it because we have finally proved the wisdom of it, and the foolishness of every thing else; advantages that are worth to us all they have cost.

God's true formula in place of all others.

And what if we shall seem to have proved something else that is more positive still; viz., that the formulizing industry, in which we have so long been occupied, was anticipated by God from the first, and that he Himself, to save us from a task so far above our powers, provided us in fact a formula of his own. Perhaps I do not mean by this exactly what we commonly mean by the word, and yet perhaps I do. A formula is a little form, a condensed representation, by figure, of some spritual truth; for every spiritual truth comes into figure and form of necessity, when it comes into language, or a statement in words. We commonly understand by a formula what is really never true of it, or is true only to the apprehensions of ignorance; viz., a propositional statement that conveys the spiritual truth or doctrine of a subject by words of exact notation. In this latter impossible sense of formula, there is none, of the Christian gospel, and what is more there never will be or can be any. But in the former and true sense, or only possible sense, the altar, with its offerings and rites of blood, is the very form and formula that God has provided for the gospel; provided, I may say, by long centuries of drill, in a liturgy of rites contrived, in fact, to serve this very purpose. After we have tried our own hand long enough, in the absurd endeavor to get up a

formula, better than God's, in the common terms of abstraction, shall we not come back humbled and shamed, to rest in the discovery that the Scripture figures of sacrifice and blood make up a complete investiture for the gospel, in all its highest meanings and profoundest mediatorial relationships? Here we have, in small, all that Christianity is, or can do for us, in the way of our reconciliation to God. Preaching, and praying, and giving praise in these words of the altar, we have the gospel in its fullest and best use, with the advantage that every thing done, in that way of use, is a confession we are always reciting. In these terms of sacrifice we are kept fresh in the gospel, and the gospel is kept fresh and vital in us. It can never die and never be corrupted, as long as our faith keeps up its confession under these figures, unless the figures themselves are corrupted by artificial and false constructions put upon them—which is more than can be said of almost any other creed, on any other subject. No church, or synod, or council, need be at all concerned for the gospel, lest it should die for the want of a creed to keep it safe, as long as Christ is accepted and clung to in God's own chosen forms—the soul's great sacrifice, the Lamb that bears and takes away its sin, the blood that sprinkles its foul conscience and makes it clean, the life that, being in the blood, quickens and hallows every thing. Let this be the preaching word of the preachers and the repenting and praising word of guilty souls, and the gospel is safe, even for eternal ages; because it is a gospel in power. Let any one contrive to make it safe, by any

other guard of orthodoxy, when it is not in power, and he will not be long in making the discovery that it is gone already. Hither, last of all, then, we return, and here we raise, in deep sorrow and shame, our confession.

We return to God.

O, thou God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, into what strange places, and how far away, hath our foolish conceit been leading us. We thought we must needs make out for thy dear Son—dear also to us because he hath come to bring us life—some wisely framed doctrine, bearing the stamp of our own wise thought and science—not so familiar and so merely practical as thy choice words of sacrifice. But we have wearied ourselves in the greatness of our way. We have raised long controversies, and held learned councils, and contrived exact articles; and though we have seemed to settle many things wisely, yet nothing is either settled or wise; but whatever we devise turns dry, looks empty, disappoints the craving of our wants, creating after all only such consent as consists in a common discord. Commanded by thee to build our altar of "whole stones" and "lift up no tool of iron upon them," we have thought to improve its look, and make it stronger, by squaring them carefully and hewing them into shapes more scientifically exact; and now that we have done it, we perceive that we have only cut them into our own stale forms, and made them "stones of emptiness." Mortified in our conceit we return, O God, to thee, and to thy free word in Christ. We are ashamed that we could go so far to find so lit-

tle, and the more that, when we return, every thing seems to be found already. Thy cross, taken as our altar, O thou Christ of God, and thou thyself the offering once for all, for our sins—what other and more sure confession do we need? We renounce the foolishness and poverty of our inventions; only be thou our sacrifice, and let us be offered up with thee in thy offering. We could not dare to put our sins upon thee, but since thou hast taken them on thyself to bear them, let us also come and take hold of thy sorrows and pains, to suffer with thee. Having boldness to enter thus into the holiest, by thy blood and priesthood, need we more to keep our unity in the truth, and is there more of truth for us to have, than to go in and out together with thee, and behold, with faces bowed, the wings of thy cherubim overspreading the mercy-seat of thy peace? Truly there is no formulary that can tell so much of thy gospel, as to call thee Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world! For if we come to confess our sins upon thy head, we have our fearing, guilt-stricken heart made strong in the confidence, that they are truly taken away. Being thus made consciously clean, is not thy great renewing power upon us, and what more is there to be found?

Coming back then to thy own formulary, O God, and having it for our sufficient confession, let our Christ himself be the mold of our doctrine, the medium of our prayers, the soul of our liberty, the informing grace and music of our hymns—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Be thy saints gathered speedily

O Lord, into these; gathered away thus from their distractions into thy clear unity; away from their own contrived poverties of meaning, into thy riches and the glorious liberties of thy truth. And so let the better ages of thy promise come; even as they meet us in the vision of thy prophet—a fair river of healing, deepening, spreading wide in its flow, and making every thing to live whithersoever the river cometh; because it issues, O Lord, from under THINE ALTAR.